REVITALIZING MENTORSHIP AMONG CHRISTIAN WOMEN: RECLAIMING OUR DAUGHTERS AND SISTERS IN SACRED SPACE

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ABSTRACT

REVITALIZING MENTORSHIP AMONG CHRISTIAN WOMEN: RECLAIMING OUR DAUGHTERS AND SISTERS IN SACRED SPACE

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My context is Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina. There is a lack of unity between the older and younger women in ministry. If the older women in the context participated in a seven-week training about mentorship, then they may be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to mentor the context's younger women. The methodology used to test the veracity of this training was through a mixed method using pre- and post-project questionnaires, focused discussions, journaling, audio/video recording, and a personality test. The data concluded that the training proved to be effective.

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My doctoral pursuit has not been an easy feat. On this academic journey, I have lost loved ones, namely my beloved Aunt Cece, my daddy, the late Ronald Royster, and my mentor, Mrs. Ethel S. Clegg. My family endured unexpected sickness and other challenging times. However, through every trial and trouble, GOD has kept my hands fastened on this theological work; and for this, I am forever grateful. Along this path, there were individuals who poured into my life knowledge, wisdom, encouragement, and monetary resources pertinent for this academic work.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this academic work to the many women who have mentored and shaped me throughout my life, beginning with my first mentor, my grandmother, Mrs. Ethel Mae Clegg, and continuing with my mother, Mrs. Valeria Royster. I also honor the memory of my father, the late Ronald Royster, whose influence and support remain ever present.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
ASOT	Apex School of Theology
CDC	Center for Disease Control
HBCU	Historical Black Colleges and Universities
LGMBC	Lattis Grove Missionary Baptist Church
NCNW	National Council of Negro Women
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
UTS	United Theological Seminary
VBS	Vacation Bible School
YWCA	Young Women Christian Association

We are frequently just a sister away from our healing. We need a woman, a sister, who will see in our destitution a jagged image of what one day could be of her own story. We need a sister who will respond with mercy.

— Renita J. Weems, *Just a Sister Away*

INTRODUCTION

This three-year doctoral journey took more than a notion. This doctoral pursuit came with strenuous trials but also with triumphant wins. Personal and academic growth paired with spiritual development came through intentional vulnerability, a growing trust in strangers, and the integration of peers, mentors, and familial support. In addition to the integration of peers, mentors, and familial support, there were instrumental papers to unload thoughts, ideas, and testimonials of mentorship. For instance, the Spiritual Autography, Contextual Analysis, Synergy, and four foundation chapters became safe spaces to share intimate experiences about my life's journey.

United Theological Seminary proved quintessential for the implementation of this final project. The underpinning of the project was depicted through the project profile, the project participant, and the project projection. The implementation of the doctoral project was based on privacy, permission, and privilege from each participant. The project was a seven-week process. The project implementation proved difficult to complete at times because of the participants conflicting schedules.

The Project Profile

Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church is the context. LGMBC's women's ministry lacked diversity and collaborative effort. LGMBC's women's ministry used to be a flourishing force to be reckoned with both in the church and in the community.

However, due to the lack cohesiveness of the women's ministry, younger women participation was inconsistent. In the past, the older Christian women partnered with the younger women and taught them the nuances of the LGMBC's women's ministry. The LGMBC's women's ministry had an instrumental role in its community and a staple for the household as many women were their home organizers. Many LGMBC's familial traditions converged with their religious traditions. The older women of the context cared for younger women and imparted godly wisdom, but they did not know the work of caring and instructing the younger women was called mentoring. Training the older women how to connect and edify the younger women in the context may again prove invaluable to the women's ministry. A seven-week project was designed to equip older Christian women how to mentor the younger women. The project took place at the context. Each participant received project materials and supplies free of charge.

The project required a signed consent form from each participant for their involvement during the sessions. The sessions lasted seven weeks with one week for introduction of project materials. Lessons from biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary chapters brought fresh perspectives and aided in the understanding of the diverse methods of mentorship to the nine Christian women participants.

The Project Participants

The nine Christian women aged forty-five-to-sixty-five[1] in this project served as the core group who determined the efficacy of mentorship as a tool for spiritual formation

[1] Note that in this doctoral thesis, on many occasions, the phrase older women will be referred to as the age range of women participating in the project. When the phrasing older women is used, it is referring to older women age-range forty-five to sixty-five.

between older and younger Christian women.[2] The seven-week session provided quintessential information about the participants' prior mentoring relationship experiences from different platforms. The project reduced in size of participants because of life circumstances but as a result, two of the participants withdrew their support from the project. Seven of nine women remained faithful to the project despite the loss of two of their counterparts. The remaining women discussed biblical lessons, session papers, and writing assignments on how to improve the women's ministry through mentorship. At the context's creation, older women disciples mentored their daughters and sisters and prepared them for leadership. Upon reviewing the participants' firsthand responses from the pre-and post-project questionnaires, discussions, journal writings, and videos, the researcher resolved the mentorship training was a success. The project proved that the context could benefit from a mentorship model in its overall ministry. Despite the participants who described their former Christian relationships with other women as being difficult because of the communication and lack of commonality with their younger counterparts, the project verified as an asset to the context because the older women were equipped to develop impactive relationships with younger Christian women.

The Project Proposal

The following chapters explained the project's development. Chapter one, Ministry Focus, share reflections from my childhood to the present. The educational paths and the building of life-long relationships expressed the importance of being

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[2] When the phrasing younger Christian women is used in this doctoral thesis, it is referring to women age twenty-two to forty-five.

willing to share time and other resources with others. The first chapter synergized the context analysis and the spiritual autobiography. The first chapter showed need for mentorship between older women and younger women in the context and helped shape understanding about nurturing and teaching in relationships.

Chapter two, Biblical Foundations, highlighted Titus 2:3-5 as the biblical text that speaks to the narrative of mentoring and its importance. This chapter offered other mentorship models for consideration and offered instrumental insights about relationships from a biblical perspective. For instance, the relationship of Mary and Elizabeth was also couched in Elizabeth's counsel to Mary. Chapter two illuminated teaching and leadership models. Naomi taught Ruth about her God and Jewish culture. From the biblical aspect, mentorship was the Christian's responsibility.

Chapter three, Historical Foundations, depicted Dorothy Height's and Marry McLeod Bethune's relationship. This mentorship embodied a caring, teaching, and spiritual empowerment for women of color to glean from. Bethune saw Height's potential to end and change the political landscape of their time. Height shadowed Bethune's political savviness and later became her successor. Height's and Bethune's mentorship inspired other women to follow suit.

Chapter four, Theological Foundations, focused on theology from a missional, relational, and spiritual standpoint. Chapter four discussed theological anthropology and womanist theology. The fourth chapter showed the relationship between humanity and GOD as well as humanity with one another. The image of GOD, the *Imago Dei,* underpinned humanity's identity. Theological principles and practices reminded Christians of their origin and duty to one another.

Chapter five, Interdisciplinary Foundations, examined mentorship from organizational leaders and their staff. Relationships among departments strengthened the core values of major corporations like Mattel and Disney. However, relationships between executives and team members are not the only examples that are helped. My relationship with my grandmother was quintessential to my ministry development and life journey. Despite the multigenerational differences in my home, a strong and life-changing relationship between my grandmother and me was achieved.

Chapter six, Project Analysis, contained the implementation of the doctoral project. The project lasted seven weeks and was orchestrated on the context's campus. The project involved nine older women from my context. I chose the older women in the context to begin the process of mentorship because of their leadership experience and influence in the context. The closing chapter exposed how communication psychology could bridge gaps of misunderstanding between older and younger women.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

As a young girl growing up on the Warner Air Force Base, I did not attend church. Growing up, I had a loving family with a mom and dad who provided well for me and my two younger siblings. My family was not religious. My mom and dad believed in God, but God was not a central figure in our home. However, my mom did teach me how to say my bedtime prayers to keep the "Boogie Man" away. As a child, I believed in the Boogie Man, Wonder Woman, Santa Claus, and the Easter Bunny; but I did not know who Jesus was.

As a child, I remember going to school and singing in music class about the joy of Jesus. My music teacher was animated; she would make learning enjoyable. She made learning fun — even songs about Jesus. I looked forward to going to school to learn to read and to sing about Jesus. I did not enjoy singing about Jesus because I knew that He existed even though I did not have a personal relationship with Him. Also, it was because my music teacher was going to clap her hands and do her dance while yelling, "Jesus Is alive."

Singing about Jesus and saying my prayers was the extent of me knowing about God. My dad was away from our home for months at a time. My mom often played the card game Pinochle with her girlfriends. Mom and her girlfriends played Pinochle for hours at a time. When dad returned home from work or from his touring, he played the

card game Biz Whiz. My parents took their card games seriously, and on the weekend, they enjoyed card tournaments. However, after the card tournaments, mom and dad argued. While my parents argued, I took my younger siblings to the park or anywhere to protect their ears from hearing our parents fight. After much arguing and absences, my parents separated and finally divorced. The divorce was a good thing for my mom, my siblings, and me. It took my parent's divorce and my maternal grandmother's menopausal meltdown for me to meet God and Jesus. It took calamity in my life for me to pursue God and learn who I was because of Him. I am convinced that the youth in the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church, where I serve as an associate minister, as far as worship and church activities are concerned, are inactive or absent altogether. I believe the younger generation of children and young adults aged from five years to thirty-five years of age are disturbingly dispersed and have become the diaspora of some changing and challenging times in my church.

After my parents divorced, my mom, siblings, and I relocated to mom's hometown, Durham, North Carolina. My maternal grandmother lived in Durham. My grandmother was going through a life transition called "the change." The "change" was another term older women used for menopause. During my grandmother's bout with menopause, she became depressed and dependent on my mom's financial help and life assistance. However, before grandmother became afflicted with menopause, she was a God-fearing, church working, and Bible-toting woman of faith. Grandmother opened her pristine home and heart to her daughter and three children — all under the age of five years old. Mom reared my siblings and me to be very mannerable and to have respect for elders. As children, my siblings and I knew upon entering a room to greet people

appropriately. Many children enter rooms that are occupied by people and do not greet them with hello, good morning, good afternoon, or good evening. My parents taught my siblings and me to show honor for people but not so much for God. I learned about God from my grandmother before menopause changed her outgoing and uplifting demeanor. Grandmother rose early in the morning before sunrise. Once the sun rose, it would shine through our bedroom curtains. Grandmother rose early to meet God.

One morning, I heard grandmother crying in her room, and grandmother's crying got my attention. I went to my grandmother's room and saw her kneeling and rocking at her bedside. I did not see where my grandmother was hurting; but still she cried and rocked. Had someone died? I wondered if that was why my grandmother was weeping. I also remember that while my grandmother was praying, her lips would move but her words were not discernible. One morning, I asked my grandmother who she was talking to. I wanted to know about her crying and speaking words that barely could be heard whenever she would be on her knees rocking back and forth. My grandmother responded, "the Lord," as she walked out of her room not even giving me a second look. As a child, sometimes others' crying made me feel afraid and worried.

However, after grandmother said, "the Lord," I was intrigued. Grandmother noticed my genuine interest in what she was doing in her prayer time. One night as she was praying, she took the time and introduced me to God. My introduction to God changed the trajectory of my life. I do not know what nor where I would be today if I were not saved. As a young person, it was my grandmother who introduced me to the Lord. As a result of my introduction to Jesus, I want to introduce Jesus to others, especially to young people.

The world has many triggers that cause young people to live sinfully. The world has a myriad of negative connotations for young disciples. For instance, as a child regenerative, nay-sayers called me a “holy-roller.” I was ridiculed and mocked for singing in the neighborhood choir. Most people that I knew went to church, but there were many people that did not attend church.

Grandmother’s neighborhood had many children. In each house there were at least two children living there. One of my grandmother’s neighbors recruited my siblings and me to sing in the neighborhood choir. My grandmother was pleased about my siblings and my departure from the house, but my mother was excited about our leaving for rehearsal. Mom was probably excited because our absence gave her a break from her children. My siblings and I were not mischievous children, but we were children. My mother did not get much time alone. Mom worked hard to keep the house from foreclosure and to keep food on our kitchen table.

The neighborhood choir was a great diversion from the affairs that made home sometimes sad. I sang in the choir until I started middle school. Many of the children who sang in the choir did the same thing; they left the choir to explore life’s next chapter for them. I still believed the words of the songs about the love of God. However, sometimes, God got in my way. I ignored Him and followed my own path. God got in my way as a teenager. I ignored God and as a result, I became a mother before I was ready.

Although I loved being a mom, as I do today, I also understood that I trespassed God’s plan for my life. Having children before being married was a sure sign of disobedience. After I broke God’s law, I struggled with whether God would take me back. However, God did take me back after my first baby, and God took me back after

my second baby. Each of my pregnancy experiences literally could have resulted in death for me and my children. I prayed while the obstetricians created birthing plans to deliver my children and me safely from hurt, harm, and danger. However, it was God who spared our lives from the death that was lurking in the delivery room.

Because of what God has brought me through, I made a vow to myself to seek God again and to remain with Him. For God to do for me in terms of what He did for me and my babies, He is worthy and surely deserves my praise. God saw me through wrong relationships, divorces, and some hard times. I truly am very thankful to God for His amazing grace and mercy for bringing me through.

I do not mind sharing my story with young people about how God loves his children through the ignorance, disobedience, and sinful nature of their lives. God allowed me to rear my children, sometimes without the help of their fathers. After I had my children, I witnessed my family embody the love of Christ. My parents and grandmother did not celebrate the act that resulted in my pregnancy, but they rejoiced over the miracles that came into our lives. My daughter and son are five years apart. My children have been in church all their lives. My children are far from being perfect, but my children have a love for God that sets them apart from the sins of this world. As a young mother of two and as a wife, life became more complicated for me. My husband was an addict. My son's health was afflicted with seizures, and my daughter experienced anxiety issues.

I met my husband while attending Surgical Technology School to pursue a better life for my children. I was already a hair stylist and styling hair caused me to be able to make a decent living for me and my children. However, as my children began to grow up,

so did my expenses. I became a surgical technologist and worked in the operating room in surrounding communities. My husband was my surgical technology professor.

My husband and I met and grew close almost immediately. We married and suddenly, all hell broke loose in my life. My newlywed husband was a crack addict. Unknowing to me, my husband was a functioning addict. Money fueled my husband's addiction. Expensive and inexpensive items were taken from our home. Manipulation and deception were present in our home, but so was grace and mercy. Church was where I learned about the grace and mercy of God.

My church home was my place of refuge. I wore different clothes to church each week but had the same smile. I worked hard to keep my painful and embarrassing life hidden from everyone, even my family. However, my family did learn of the horror that I was experiencing. I began to receive comfort from my loved ones during my storm, but I did not think about my children who were still suffering from terror. Even though I thought about divorcing my husband, I wanted to love the unlovable. I believed my love would heal, deliver, and set the captive in my husband free. I grew depressed and more confused each day that God had not done anything to help my babies and me in the mess that I made. My children were acting out because they were trying to feel the love that once filled our home. My children were robbed of precious time — time that would never be refunded. I began looking for a way out, but each door led to another long hallway of misery for my children and me. I was disappointed in church, and I was disappointed in God. My life was in disarray and I asked, "Where is God?" It was during this turbulent time in my life that I received my calling to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I believed that God would surely make things better for me if I said yes to Him. God spoke to me that I would preach to the imprisoned, neglected, and the unloved. I said yes to God without fully knowing what that yes meant. However, God started revealing to me what my yes to God meant. My yes to God meant going to seminary. I did not know then, but God was equipping me for His glory. My equipping experience involved me enrolling into a school for a few years and sitting among students and professors who saw me as inferior.

I remembered my grandmother's praying, rocking, and crying, and after some time at Southeastern Baptist Theological College (SEBTS), I found myself doing the same thing. I grappled with how I was going to perform God's word for me to attend seminary when I did not have a degree. I was surrounded by people who did not look like me. I complained about my concerns regarding SEBTS to God and God did not respond. I paid an extensive amount of money to register each semester and to purchase books and God did not respond.

Soon, my husband and I parted ways and without his income, I could no longer afford to attend SEBTS. I withdrew from this school, where the students were predominantly white, feeling like a failure. Somehow, I knew God had not changed His mind about me. In the city where I lived, a relatively new seminary named Apex School of Theology (ASOT) had opened. I immediately enrolled in ASOT. There were people who looked like me, worshiped like me, and had a similar theology as mine. I instantly felt comfortable in my new theological setting.

I was introduced to the disciplines of courses while in theology school. I enjoyed learning about church history, biblical communications, pastoral care, hermeneutics,

homiletics, morals, ethics, and other elective classes. Not only was I introduced to the classes and the nuances of theological school, but I was introduced to my husband.

While I attended seminary, my husband was a supportive system for me. My husband and I both preached the word of God and he understood the mighty mantle that God had put upon me. During my time at ASOT, I graduated and earned my Bachelor's Degree in Biblical Theology with honors. The East Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Church Association ordained me two months later.

After graduating from ASOT, I enrolled in Shaw University Divinity School (SUDS), a Historical Black College or University (HBCU). I began a different theological journey excited and hopeful that I would have an impactive experience, and I did. I graduated with my Master of Divinity from SUDS in May 2023. God used SUDS to cultivate my understanding about ministry as well as enlarge my theological perspective about the Bible and the world I live in.

I serve as an associate minister at my church; therefore, I am considered a leader. I lead in a faith organization as well. Also, I lead on my job. I do not take leading others for granted; instead, I am humbled to perform such a task. Humility is the core of servitude. Not only is humility an important aspect of servitude but compassion, patience, and creativity are as well. As an associate minister, I am a practitioner of pastoral care.

When I speak to individuals about at my church or anywhere, the information is confidential. I have engaged in deep conversations with the people I serve. I learn more about the people I serve through heartfelt conversations. I am even more aware that everyone who wears a smile is not happy. A few of the youth have spoken to me privately because I have developed a rapport with them. I used to be the dance ministry

president for several years. Teens, dance, and music go together. As the dance ministry president, my image as a minister was more appealing to the youth. Often, being a minister can convey strong connotations. LGMBC's youth can be evasive around those who have authoritative roles, like an associate minister.

Context

There are 3,577 people in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina. In 2021, North Carolina reported that 10.55 million people resided in the state. Of the 3,577 residents, LGMBC claims 500 people as its members. Hurdle Mills has a diverse population, but the leading percentage of people living in Hurdle Mills are natives. There are 46.63% female and 53.37 % male in Hurdle Mills. The male population is 1,909 and 1,668 for the female population.[1]

Residents under eighteen years of age are 21.4% of the Orange County population. Orange County is the region that Hurdle Mills is situated in. Orange County has a poverty rate of 12.6% which is slightly lower than the state 12.8 % average. The poverty average is important to know because graduates from the nearby colleges and universities come from affluent communities. Mostly, non-Black people in Orange County live below the poverty line.[2] LGMBC's multicultural congregation is mostly composed of heterosexually married individuals, Baby Boomers, and Traditionalists. However, few in attendance are Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, Millennials,

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[1] Places.US.COM, "About Hurdles Mills, NC," https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?shva=1#inbox/FMfcgzQZSjZnVCjbXhtfHngxQFzkmmJJ?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1.

[2] Places.US.COM, "About Hurdles Mills, NC," https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?shva=1#inbox/FMfcgzQZSjZnVCjbXhtfHngxQFzkmmJJ?projector=1&messagePartId=0.1.

and Xennials. Although the Baby Boomers are the parents of the Generation X babies, the Generation X congregants are not present in the LGMBC. Surprisingly, the traditionalists generation in their old age are the anchors of LGMBC. The traditionalist, the parents of the Baby Boomers, were born from 1901-1924. It was the traditionalists who led the entourage of members from the former LGMBC to its new home. Years ago, the traditionalist generation was the leading group at LGMBC. However, many of the traditionalists are dying and the LGMBC's future successors are not much younger than their predecessors. To strengthen the sustainability of LGMBC, it is important to note the need for future successors who are now in a mentoring age and shifting from being a "mentee" to a "mentor."

During this period of time, millennials have been instrumental in this paradigm shift while at the same time bringing a new skill set of understanding society and the advantages of using technology in its outreach and mentoring. LGMBC, like many churches, has morphed into two separate entities — virtual and physical space. Large screens, ring lighting, microphones, tripods, and special filters have become necessary tools to record or go-live online. If the church is going to continue, the youth must be willing to come and to remain. Youth are essential in the transformation of LGMBC.

Just like youthful persons are essential, the LGMBC's history is also essential. LGMBC's history represents the stability and credibility of its service to its community. LGMBC has a long history in Hurdle Mills despite the sting of racism, inequality, and exclusion witnessed all over the region. LGMBC has survived a four-year pandemic. Churches that are nearby LGMBC closed because of Covid and did not re-open for three years. LGMBC closed its building but maintained praise and worship service outside on

the parking lot, even in hot temperatures. LGMBC hosted its annual fall revival on low lit evenings for three nights. The LGMBC congregants wore masks, practiced social distancing, wore gloves, and wiped down with alcohol-based gels to remain safe and open for service. LGMBC's older members relied on its younger members to record and to keep the gospel message going forth. The pandemic period was a common thread in the LGMBC and its community. The longer the pandemic lasted the more comfortable LGMBC's members became. Many accepted the changes of the pandemic as the new normal.

Outreach ministry was contactless. LGMBC phoned members using a calling list. After a few weeks, many of the well-check calls ceased. LGMBC reopened its sanctuary before any of the neighboring churches. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) policies and procedures were implemented; and once again, LGMBC resumed worship service on the inside. Sadly, the youth did not return to worship service as expected.

LGMBC instituted virtual biblical classrooms through Zoom. Operating Zoom was a difficult task for the technologically challenged. Computer operations, blogging, posting, and live feeds were taught to children as young as five years old. Technology may be a more familiar way of life for the young population because that is all they know. Numerous young people have never heard of a rotary phone or the yellow pages in a phone book. Times of old are archaic and obsolete. For example, a person can sign a document through voice application. Doctor visits and board meetings can all be done from the comfort of one's home. Nothing is like it was ten years ago. Fewer people – both the young and old – are not "doing" church, meaning in physical presence. Some youth expressed that going to church was "doing church." Doing church is the act of

going to church but not necessarily allowing church to be in you. Church is not something a believer does, but church is who we are as Christians. Communal worship is expected of Christians. LGMBC hosts its revivals and homecoming celebrations twice a year for community and church interaction. Meeting the community's needs is what ministry is all about but fellowshipping with the community in church is discipleship.

LGMBC has love for its older congregants and its youth. A quote unfortunately attributed to Socrates speaks to a potential LGMBC's inflection point: "The secret of change is to focus all of your energy, not on fighting the old, but on building the new."[3] LGMBC may be experiencing some growing pains, but growing is not dying. The world is evolving and so is LGMBC. If LGMBC is to fulfill its kingdom assignment, it must be willing to relinquish the reins to the next generation. A church that is absent of children is a church that is soon to close indefinitely.

My leadership skills and innate ability to draw the youth to LGMBC can help grow a stronger and more effective ministry. The youth will likely become more knowledgeable about Artificial Intelligence (AI). As the world transforms to a deeper context of computers, AI will likely be considered more useful. Bookkeeping, written administrative duties, and other penned material may become obsolete as technology becomes more convoluted in the world and in LGMBC.

The youth can become the conduit by which technology integrates LGMBC. AI needs human hands to be successful as AI cannot download requested data. AI cannot perform sick visits or watch family's loved one's transition. The older generation will

[3] This quote is misattributed to Socrates; however, it appears in Dan Millman, *Way of the Peaceful Warrior* (Belvedere Tiburon, CA: H. J. Kramer, 2006). The book features a character named Socrates who is a gas station attendant.

likely prefer a human hug opposed to a robot hug. AI cannot discern the fear of an older member or the excitement of a child. Comforting smiles and warm hellos come from a warm heart of which an AI device will not have.

LGMBC embraces its older generation but also desires to retain its younger generation. Questionable clothes, music, hairstyles, worship styles, and other contrary youthful characteristics may have numerous traditionalists shaking their heads in disagreement. However, GOD can use anyone to lead his people and certainly to worship Him.

Worship at the LGMBC is ingrained in the hearts and memory of its congregants; there is no printed liturgy to follow. LGMBC has two choirs: a men's choir and a combined choir of middle-aged and older individuals. There are two individuals aged slightly younger than the others who sing in the combined choir. LGMBC also has a praise team composed mostly of older adults aged from twenty-two to forty-five years old.

Strangely, LGMBC once had an older choir full of seniors. Because of night rehearsals and poor attendance, the senior choir dismantled. The children's choir discontinued its operation because parents would not bring their children to Saturday practices. The two failing choirs symbolized a great concern and an even bigger need in LGMBC. LGMBC has an appreciation for the older members but also a need for the younger members. Both the older and younger generations are vital to the sustainability of the LGMBC.

Synergy

LGMBC is a pillar of support for Hurdle Mills, and it is a prominent house of faith for numerous Orange County worshippers. LGMBC has a diverse congregation, but its younger members who are aged from five to thirty-five are fewer. As the younger population is missing from LGMBC, so is the influence that this group of individuals can bring. The younger population possesses computer and other technology knowledge and skills that can be instrumental in the growth and development of LGMBC.

LGMBC does have an audio and video ministry. The audio and video ministry has a live feed. There is a camera, a tripod, and a soundboard to capture the powerful sermons and worship experiences. The LGMBC worship video recordings can be viewed on social media for free. Numerous viewers have shared or liked LGMBC's worship videos. The LGMBC pastor also teaches Bible study on Wednesdays at noon.

Some viewers have become members because of LGMBC's worship recordings. There are some viewers who desire to remain virtual congregants. Occasionally, LGMBC's virtual disciples join face-to-face and fellowship with everyone in person. LGMBC has an invaluable presence both online and in-person for numerous Hurdle Mills' residents. LGMBC's ongoing activities and services are advertised through its recordings.

LGMBC allows viewers to give monetarily through a myriad of portals. LGMBC donates as needs arise in the community. LGMBC's deacon board and benevolence ministry work hard to allocate funds to those who are destitute. Sometimes the recipients are members and at other times, the ones in need are strangers. Scripture says feed my

sheep. LGMBC has numerous resources to offer the community and the church body. Youth is not one of the resources.

LGMBC's rich history has included children. In LGMBC's earlier years, there were children in the choir, in the dance ministry, and with the tutorial ministry. Youth working in the church drew other children to LGMBC. Children bring a special kind of joy to the church, but most of all, children bring longevity to the church. During the spring, Vacation Bible School (VBS) is held. Several communities come to LGMBC and participate in the week or three-day family fun event.

There are youth and adults who fill LGMBC's classes to learn about the Bible. The Bible lessons are fun and integrative for all ages. During VBS, games and delicious food is served nightly. On the last night of VBS, the inside and outside of LGMBC is filled with children and adults laughing, clapping, singing, and eating.

Each VBS year brings more and more youth to LGMBC; however, during the regular Sunday morning services and Sunday School, the younger population is not well represented at LGMBC. The youth are important to LGMBC; and whether the youth realize it or not, the church is important for them as well. LGMBC's older population can share their talents and interests with the youth.

Numerous public schools do not instruct children how to write in cursive; therefore, signatures have become grossly outdated. There is a plethora of benefits that a youth can gain from befriending an older saint. LGMBC's population is mostly African American. African American history is not effectively taught in many public schools for numerous youth in the LGMBC.

LGMBC hosted a social justice forum to discuss how its African American youth see themselves among their instructors. Sadly, there was not a great presence of African American teachers in the classes of many LGMBC children. LGMBC's older generations fill in the void for its children where brown and black people are not seen in the spaces of its counterparts. Orange County, Person County, and Hurdle Mills are former slave districts. Orange County was one of the largest slave regions in North Carolina.

Numerous LGMBC congregants who are traditionalist still feel subservient to their white counterparts. LGMBC's youth may never understand how beautiful their skin color is or how powerful their presence can become to a white person. The LGMBC is where the youth and the older generation can learn about the former world, the current world, and the world to come. My grandmother loved sharing the gospel with anyone who cared to listen but especially with children.

My grandmother and others like her deserve a space in GOD's world where they matter, not just because they are black, but because they are alive. Seldom do the older generation at LGMBC ask questions about the new way the offering is collected or how the meetings are conducted. Maybe because asking questions at their old age makes them feel unwise or useless.

Numerous older LGMBC individuals come to worship, but I wonder how many depart to serve. A driver's license is the oldest privilege that some LGMBC saints have. The older generation faces life with dimmer eyes. There is disparity and sometimes fear for those who once were looked to as strong and brave. The youth can be the bridge over the troubled water for many LGMBC's older saints. As the older population continue life as they know it, the world is changing and so are many churches.

LGMBC has changed into two separate entities, and each must be manned for our mission to continue. I want the elderly of LGMBC to experience the joy and power of technology without fear and dis-ease. Medical appointments, ordering groceries, and even church meetings are performed online. LGMBC offers new resources to its members that can challenge and enrich their minds. However, one must be interested in learning the new ways of the church.

Some of LGMBC's older population are determined that learning at their old age is difficult and unnecessary. The age of technology has challenges for every age but understandably for senior citizens. One reason older people may struggle with technology is because technology is evolutionary. There are constant upgrades and newer versions of the same model. This may be one reason, but another reason why older people may struggle with technology is because of the verbiage. Technology verbiage can be confusing. For instance, some individuals may not know that QR is the verbiage for Quick Response — the barcode that makes linking to specific material convenient.

The ease and readiness of scanning a QR code may be easier for those who are proficient with cellular phones, but for people who do not understand the functionality of a cellular phone, the QR code is confusing. Technology can be both necessary and unnecessary depending on the user. There are LGMBC members who do not like having a phone married to their persons. The same persons who may be annoyed by technology may not own computer or comparable electronics.

Individuals who maintain their argument that they do not have to change with the world may be in denial. There is hardly anything offline that you cannot get online, and sometimes an item or function can only be performed online. LGMBC has an alarm

system and internet connections that can only be served online. The pandemic challenged LGMBC's versatility.

LGMBC was used to accomplishing banking, maintaining membership logs, and other tedious tasks with pen and paper prior to purchasing a desktop computer. The desktop computer made administrative duties easier and faster for LGMBC's finance committee and the office of the church secretary. However, sometimes when the power blacked out, LGMBC had to revert to their antiquated methods of keeping records. The pastor, deacons, and the trustees have enjoyed their Zoom meetings.

The Zoom meetings allowed LGMBC's administrators to meet while remaining in their comfortable environments. In fact, LGMBC's Zoom meetings had the most participants. I would argue that people enjoyed meeting and eating or meeting and having the rest of their evening to themselves. When some of LGMBC's meetings were on the property, attendance was low.

Sadly, there are some older Sunday School teachers who desire to teach but are threatened by technology and the changes and the challenges it may bring. Zoom meetings do not work for those who refuse to learn or have limited understanding about electronics. The Sunday School teachers' meetings are hosted in person at LGMBC on the third Saturday of the month. However, if the Sunday School teachers' meeting is on Zoom, while Zoom is convenient, everyone will not be able to attend the meeting.

LGMBC takes great pride in its Christian Education department. Teaching about GOD through HIS word is the task of the Sunday School teacher. I advocated for the LGMBC Sunday School teachers to learn and to grow together. Enlisting young people

who are fluid in technology and pairing them with individuals who are not may strengthen LGMBC's seniors' computer illiteracy.

LGMBC must grow together to be successful in ministry. LGMBC's inauguration proves that their founders worked together. Someone donated the land of LGMBC's former home; someone began electing leaders to sustain order. LGMBC made sure no disciple was left behind. I propose LGMBC adhere to the same disciplines and principles that makes LGMBC what it is today. Before LGMBC can continue attempting great things for GOD, LGMBC must get on one accord and train up its seniors and its youth.

Change can come with numerous challenges, but as a result of those challenges, solidarity can come. There is much work for LGMBC to accomplish. I do not want to see LGMBC's seniors becoming pew warmers and doing nothing but waiting to die. I believe God has a plan for LGMBC's older population individually and for LGMBC collectively to make an impression in HIS kingdom.

Worship services and teaching opportunities within the church have changed as we know them. Social media that once was spoken of in a derogatory way is one the vehicles that LGMBC uses to spread the gospel free of charge. Technology and LGMBC have become partners in ministry as some of LGMBC's methodology has transformed as it pertains to communion, offering, and discipleship.

When watching online, disciples can take communion eating their preferred cracker and juice. Online viewing provides a convenience for the offering that can be collected through various portals, and no one has to remain seated through the prayer, preaching hour, or the call to discipleship because there is flexibility. Although there is flexibility, there is no accountability when one watches on social media.

Social media allows the ministry of LGMBC to reach beyond its rural borders. Continents and countries can become members of LGMBC through viewing the provided worship footage. My grandmother ministered to me at her bedside, but how much more incredible could her ministry have been with technology. My grandmother impacted me at an early age to love God and His word, but more importantly, God's people. God's people are all over the world.

As LGMBC's congregation grows older, new learning may be a task. However, if the strength of LGMBC's body is paired with its weakened area, everyone can benefit. The young, old, black, white, and other ethnicities can grow together to perform the will of God. The three weakened areas of LGMBC are communication, inclusion, and follow-through.

LGMBC suffers with effective communication amongst the leaders and congregation, both young and old. There are church conferences that inform and educate about current and upcoming changes. The current and upcoming changes involving LGMBC will likely have a greater impact on the lives of the older population. Changes like internet cables in the communities and church district may help strengthen the church's electronic signaling.

Without sufficient signaling, numerous LGMBC members' electronic devices will be of no use. An internet company promised to broaden its region to accommodate the residents of Orange, Person, and Hurdle Mills Counties. However, the internet company reneged on the offer to supply the area with better internet service. The operation of many services was interrupted due to poor internet service. Without an appropriate internet service, the daily functions of LGMBC will be affected.

For instance, live video feeds, congregational recitations, and Zoom meetings will be halted until an internet adjustment can be made. Not only is communication a weakened area but also inclusion. Inclusion of the entire LGMBC is a problem if the older disciples are not able to meet, worship, or give monetary support through technology. Many older congregants prefer to give their monetary offering in person rather than online. However, if the older individual is home ridden or the church suffers another shut down, how then will the older congregants financially support LGMBC?

Numerous older LGMBC saints do not drive at night. Listening to the service via phone conference can be helpful to enjoy preaching or teaching. LGMBC's older members are not on the same grid of learning that many of its cohorts. However, with the proper instructions and a little patience, LGMBC's older generation can become computer literate. Missionary meetings, choir rehearsals, and other LGMBC events can be heard and seen by all congregants.

Lastly, follow-through is an area of concern. Each LGMBC member is guilty of not seeing an assignment through to completion. Interest, cohesiveness, and commitment or follow-through are some of the reasons why there is not a youth choir or many youth who attend worship service. Giving the youth an opportunity to brand themselves at LGMBC may help the youth to experience ownership. Showing interest in the youth of LGMBC by attending events and special occasions outside of church may solidify for them that they are important to the elders of LGMBC.

In the past, LGMBC's youth presided over service on Youth Sunday. However, when the youth choir dismantled, so did youth Sunday. Numerous congregants who are older than the youth but not older than the senior citizens at LGMBC would find if they

took the time to get to know the youth, they would find them to be jewels — better than nice people. Despite the youth's selection in clothes, music, language, and worship, the youth are an integral part of LGMBC. LGMBC's older saints and the younger saints can learn how to address the ongoing changes and challenges together.

Hiring an external technology team to host a tutorial for every leadership conference may help ingrain the understanding of the modernity's new age. Numerous old people need repetitive learning to grasp understanding. After seeing the benefits of technology, LGMBC's older members may appreciate the convenience, and the quick way tasks can be accomplished.

I can share my limited computer knowledge with the various ones who struggle with learning technology verbiage and functions. I utilize my laptop, iPad, and iPhone for school, ministry, and entertainment. Computers are a way of life for me and my family. Before my ninety-nine years "young" grandmother became elderly, I set up her email. My grandmother was excited to hear "you've got mail." My grandmother felt included in the transformation of the world; but sadly, she was never able to learn many computer features.

My goal is to advocate for LGMBC's older population who want to learn how to become computer literate and be more included in the functions of LGMBC and the world. My experience as minister, a student, and my pastoral care abilities can prove vital ministries to the transformation of LGMBC. I hope to help create a workable plan that will hopefully result in effective communication, inclusion of all LGMBC's members, and commitment or follow-through of agendas to improve church cohesiveness.

One project I would like to host is an icebreaker between the elders and the youth to have an elder prom. The prom would be the reverse of a high school prom. The youth would chaperone the elders and serve them in their Sunday's best. The elder prom would encourage a bond between the aged and the LGMBC youth. The missionary ministry is composed of older adults. The missionary group desires youth to join them as they seek to connect with the community. There are youth who have never been out in the community to represent God. The financial support that LGMBC gives the community is greatly appreciated by the recipients. However, going into the community evangelizing and discipling is what the youth of LGMBC needs to know how to do. The youth in turn can mentor the elders with computer skills and the elders can mentor the youth about missionary work. Discipleship can be a shared experience between GOD and HIS people.

However, as culture and climate change in the church and community, discipleship can become difficult. LGMBC's older population may be overlooked due to poor internet service; but more importantly, the older population is overlooked due to computer illiteracy. How does a technology-driven church like LGMBC reach the computer illiterate and effectively communicate ideas, changes, and other pertinent information to the church body? How does LGMBC's aging population face the new technology aged church? LGMBC is a wonderful place to grow, learn, and to develop one's gifting, but one does not grow, learn, and develop alone.

Conclusion

To this end, I propose that the elderly need to know, understand, and be able to use technology in a variety of ways as they navigate today's society, especially when it

comes to evangelizing and discipling as the elderly and youth help to spread the gospel message across the globe. The elderly can share their wisdom as well as the ways in which technology can be beneficial once they understand its functional use and value. Together, the elderly and the youth will share their life experiences and computer knowledge and become stronger together.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The word "mentor" is defined by the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary* as "an experienced and trusted advisor."[1] While I can agree with this definition, I would also add that a mentor is one who makes sacrifice of time, shares knowledge, nurtures, and requires attention from both mentor and mentee. Given the definition of the *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, mentor(ship) can result from pairing familial individuals as well as non-related individuals.[2] For the sake of brevity, the focus of this paper will remain on Christian mentorship as it pertains to late-middle-age adulthood Christian women (forty-five to sixty-five) and early-middle-age adulthood Christian women (twenty-two to thirty-four).

Christian mentorship is outside of the norms of secularity. In the secular realm, the Bible may or may not be referenced as a source of guidance during mentoring. Whereas the Bible may be the sole source for Christian mentorship, numerous Christians may agree that many books of the Bible demonstrate a type of mentorship model. For

[1] J. Pearsal, "Christian Perspective on Mentoring," *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, *10th ed* (Oxford, UK: 2002, OUP. 2002), DOI:10.1177/0265378812457752. trn.sagepub.com.

[2] J. Pearsal, "Christian Perspective on Mentoring," *Concise Oxford English Dictionary*, *10th ed* (Oxford, UK: 2002, OUP. 2002), DOI:10.1177/0265378812457752. trn.sagepub.com.

instance, mentorship for a Christian who is single but seeking marriage may examine the Book of Ruth.

On the other hand, the Christian who is in ministerial leadership may peruse the Book of Esther for a model in mentorship. United Kingdom freelance educationalist and writer Brian E. Wakeman declares at best, "Christian mentorship is the vehicle that may drive the believer to its destiny."[3] Wakeman's ideology about Christian mentorship helps to illuminate a path that may be instrumental to my context, Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC). Wakeman is a proponent of mentorship; however, he does reveal a caveat about Christian mentorship. Wakeman argues that Christian mentorship alone is not the recipe for a holistic image.

When considering mentoring, the Christian also needs sound doctrinal teaching and application of biblical study followed by application of biblical impartation. The evidence of Christian mentorship can be determined in the growth and development of the church. However, there are some concerns that may impede Christian mentorship. For instance, the use of personal perspectives and persuasions can obscure the lines of ethics and morality. One's personal feelings should not shape another's understanding of a given situation or event. The Christian mentor should be aware of the dangers when encroaching the sphere of counseling their mentee.[4]

Counseling can negate extensive experience in human growth and development. For example, a counseling scenario may involve someone's marital situation, or other

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[3] Brian E. Wakeman, "A Christian Perspective On Mentoring," 287, sagepub.co.uk/jpournals Permission.navDOI:10.1177/0265378812457752. trn.sagepub.com.

[4] Wakeman, "A Christian Perspective On Mentoring," 287.

private business of the home. Counselors may help to resolve problems while mentors may help to avoid problems. One who mentors should be cognizant of matters for a counseling relationship versus a mentoring relationship.[5] As previously mentioned, there are mentorship models in the Bible. However, in my research, there was limited information on Christian women mentorship relationships.

The reason for low Christian women mentorship examples in the Bible may be attributed to equally low regard for Christian women authority. Deborah is a prophetess and judge in Judges 4:4. Queen Esther is a heroine and liberator in The Book of Esther. Deborah and Esther are two women in leadership but there are more leading ladies in the bible. The question becomes where are the Deborahs and Queen Esthers at LGMBC and other African American churches? Would Deborah and Esther be recognized today among testosterone-filled spaces?

Numerous Christian women may not be heard or seen and certainly not mentored if women do not mentor other women. Titus 2:3-5 is the biblical foundation that supports women in equipping and developing other women. This paper seeks to explore the outcome of Christian mentorship between the older women and younger women in my context through my biblical foundation selection — Titus 2:3-5.

Titus 2:3-5 reads,

> Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of GOD may not be discredited.[6]

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[5] Wakeman, "A Christian Perspective On Mentoring," 287.

[6] Walter J. Harrison*, The New Interpreter's Study Bible, New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2003), 21-45.

This Biblical Foundations paper flows from the introduction to the literary context. The literary context scrutinizes the selected text and other related comparable material. After the literary context, the historicity of the text will follow. The historical segment of the text will cover regions, events, and customs of that era.

The text's cultural, language, and social economics will be surveyed after the historical examination. The cultural aspect of the text will cover its societal challenges and changes. The language will reveal the native tongue of the inhabitants of the text. Social economics will demonstrate the economic influences of the text.

The major themes of the text will be culminated through the exegesis of the holy writ. After examining the text with the above criterion, the word study will follow with defined terms and explanations. The word list will convey some understanding of the text and subject matter.

Lastly, after the word list, the conclusion and the summary will follow. The conclusion and summary will offer an overview of the biblical passage. The connection of the biblical scripture and the doctoral project will be shared in the conclusion and summary.

Literary Context

The investigation of the text's literary formation was accomplished through various reading sources to give clarity of the biblical passage. Titus is an epistle, a letter to the church in Crete. Titus is a young pastor with a new congregation of Christian converts. Paul leaves Titus behind to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Cretans and disciple them. Many Cretans receive Christ and wanted to live a transformed life.

However, there is grave danger that the new converts will rescind their faith journey without proper guidance. The renewed Cretans reside in a polytheistic region in Rome where Greek gods are adored. Crete is presumably the birthplace to Zeus, king of the Greek gods.

Titus is likely from Crete and becomes Paul's companion and then later his son in the ministry. Titus is a continuation of Paul's apostolic office. Chapter one of the Titus reveals that the assumed authorship is the Apostle Paul. The letter's opening discloses Paul's apostolate, his relationship to God, Jesus, and his son in the ministry, Titus.

Titus 1:1-16 shares with the reader the objective of this letter to Titus and why Paul leaves Titus behind in Crete. One theologian contends that one reason for Paul's letters is to ensure that the gospel mission continues in Paul's absence.[7] Paul writes about the wicked conduct of the Cretans and how important it was for the converts to avoid their rebellious ways. Finally, Chapter one conveys Paul's authority over Titus, as well as his expectation of faithfulness and obedience to God's word.

Titus 2:1-15 declares that the leadership of the church must teach sound doctrine. There is false teaching in Crete and Paul is heavily concerned about the converts. Paul implements a learned behavioral model involving women, men, boys, and girls. Paul insists that each older woman teach a younger woman righteous living. Paul reiterates this same lifestyle to men that he does to women.

Lastly, Titus 3: 1-1-15 reveals to the reader about the inclusiveness of God's plan for humanity. Paul contends that God meant salvation for all humanity and how prior to

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[7] Robert W. Wall, "Romans 1. 1-15: An Introduction to the Pauline Corpus of the New Testament*," The New Testament as Canon: A Reader in Canonical Criticism*, JSNTSup, ed. Robert W. Wall and Eugene E. Lemcio (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1992), 144.

being saved, Christians were also liars and wicked and in need of Christ's love. We hear Paul appealing to the converts to give the unsaved Cretans a chance to be changed as they have been transformed by the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Authorship

The Apostle Paul is presumably the writer of Titus. The opening of Titus reveals Paul's greeting and introduction of himself. Paul's usual salutation often opens with a greeting and his witness to Jesus. Titus has one of the longest salutations from Paul. Although in Titus, Paul begins this letter differently than his other epistles. In Paul's "genuine" letters, he acknowledges himself as a servant of God and then an apostle of Jesus.[8]

Titus is one of twelve letters from the Pauline Corpus. Paul's letters are also coined by theologians as Pauline Letters. Jerome D. Quinn refers to Paul's letters: "The Pauline order is set out in two major categories: letters to churches then letters to individuals (and the churches behind them).[9] Some biblical scholars discredit Paul as the writer of Titus as well as his other letters. However, the "I" passages in the text convey the authenticity of a Pauline letter.

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[8] Fred D. Gealy and Morgan P. Noyes, *The First and Second Epistles to Timothy and The Epistle to Titus, 1:1,* in The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, vol 11, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1955), 522.

[9] Jerome D. Quinn, "P46-The Pauline Canon?," CBQ 36.3 (1974): 379-85. The Muratorian Fragment differentiates between Paul's letters to seven churches and the letters he wrote "out of affection and love to Philemon, one to Titus and two to Timothy" (lines 59-60; translation provided in Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1987), 305-7.

Marcion did not regard Paul's letters to Timothy and to Titus, the pastoral epistles, as genuine.[10] Marcion excluded Paul's letters to Timothy and to Titus from his tenet — the authorship of Paul's epistles.[11] Paul wrote letters to Timothy about similar concerns that he addressed to Titus — the order of the church. Paul teaches that the elders and bishops of the church are to have only one wife, live blamelessly, and demonstrate holy living. However, Paul does not address women in Titus until chapter 2:3.

In chapter 2, Titus prepares women for the role of leadership through mentorship. Although some theologians may nod in agreement to the silent seat of the church as the designated place for women. Paul appeals to the older women to teach the younger women morals and ethics about home and godly living. Paul is stringent about effectively teaching sound doctrine but surprisingly, he elicits the help of a novice in ministry to lead the church in Crete. Paul entrusts Titus despite his young age to oversee his elders; however, Paul charges the older women to train the younger women.

Paul understood that there are some teachings that only women can teach women. Effective mentorship for men and women involves both mentee and mentor working together to strengthen, equip, and develop one another for a desired outcome. The Book of Titus offers a unique perspective that conveys a mentorship model for women.

Titus demonstrates Christian mentorship in chapter two as a voluntary effort to become accountable for one another. As mentioned, Paul is the writer of Titus and he conveys both compassion and concern for God's people despite some of his controversial

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[10] Philip H. Towner, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 5.

[11] Towner, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament,* 5.

and biased writings. Mentorship is not a forced or coerced effort but one of compassion and concern for humanity.

Some theologians may submit that if John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ, then Paul was the drum major of the New Testament. Paul presents in each Pauline letter and text the "do and do not" disciplines for Christian living. Paul writes to Titus to coach his son in ministry. However, Paul leaves on record in the Book of Titus specific roles and responsibilities for church leaders and for Christians in general.

The world has drastically changed from Genesis chapter one where man and woman inhabited The Garden of Eden. Today, it seems that technology has created invisible barriers that have made the way humanity engages in personal space antiquated. Our world today appears Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) driven. A.I. is a digital self-help resource and tool that may dissolve Christian mentorship as the church knows it.

Christian mentorship in my context may include a holy hug and hand-in-hand prayer; both of these acts may be an old fashioned means to assist someone on their Christian journey. However, Christian mentorship has proven to be an effective way to serve in the kingdom of God. With the help of Christian mentorship, the church will become what God intended — a house of prayer, hope, refuge, instruction, and compassion. The importance of pairing older adulthood women with younger adulthood women who need gentle guidance through life's turbulent times is what this paper hopes to convey.

I chose Titus, specifically chapter 2: 3-5, to demonstrate how older Christian women can impart wisdom in young adulthood women's life experiences. The Book of Titus is the result of a mentorship between him and Paul. However, Titus 2:3-5

adequately speaks to my context's mentorship issue between old adulthood women and young adulthood women. Black women have a unique ability to uplift one another and help each other perceive, possess, and practice their "Black girl magic."[12]

Paul effectively demonstrates leadership in the church as he imparts guidance to Titus and trains him to become a leader as well. Titus is young, but he is the overseer of a Christian converted congregation in Crete. However, Titus is not alone. Paul is coaching Titus from the sidelines. Titus received effective pastoral instructions from his mentor Paul about conduct and ministry. Ministry can involve meeting the needs of a person or people. Paul writes Titus 2:3-5 and helps the reader understand ministry through mentorship.

> Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or enslaved to much wine; they are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited (Titus 2:3-5, NRSVUE).

The Book of Titus embodies the discipline, devotion, and determination that mentoring can require. During this paper, at times, I will refer to the Book of Titus as simply Titus. To clarify the happenings of Titus, I will examine its literary context, social climate, culture, and religiosity.

Titus is the seventeenth book of the New Testament. The Book of Titus has three chapters and is arguably the shortest of Paul's writings. This Pauline epistle, Titus, has been coined one of three pastoral books — I and II Timothy are the other two. Paul

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[12] Diana Wandix-White and Salma Boyd, "Black Women Empowering One Another Through Mentorship," *Journal of African American Women and Girls in Education* 2, no. 3 (Fall 2002): 1, DOI: 10.21423, jaawge-v2i3a 136.

composed the letter to Titus differently than his previous epistles. Paul's usual salutation and hierarchical order demonstrated Paul's servitude to Jesus Christ first and then God.

However, in the book of Titus, Paul intentionally lists God first. Maybe Paul's reason for opening this way is to show Titus the order of command, God the father, Jesus Christ his son, and Paul as his servant. *The Interpreter's Bible* contends that Paul notes his role as an apostle of Jesus but a servant or slave of God[13] as a possible reason for Paul's unconventional opening in Titus.

Titus is likely a young Gentile convert who Paul discipled during a missionary effort. Titus was taught previously by "false teachers" that obtaining a circumcision of the flesh was required for a Gentile to become a Christian. However, Titus was discouraged by Paul to accept such teaching of flesh circumcision. Titus became a proponent of the gospel of Jesus Christ' truth about conversion through circumcision of the heart.[14]

Paul discipled, trained, and mentored Titus in church planting but mostly Paul equipped Titus against false teaching. Titus accompanied Paul while on his missionary journey throughout the Roman providence where false teaching was prominent. Titus is first mentioned in II Corinthians 8:16. Paul records in Galatians 2:3 about Titus accompanying him on a missionary trip to Jerusalem to further preach against false teaching.

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[13] Ernest F. Scott and Robert R. Wicks, *Philippians – Hebrews*, in The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, vol xi, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1955), 48-49.

[14] James R. Edwards, *Galatians*, in The Interpreter's Study Bible (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003), 22.

Paul pens Titus 2:3-5 from a separate missionary journey outside of his son's Titus' mission. Paul leaves behind Titus in Crete to instill order for the church in Crete.[15] Crete is a Greek island, the fifth largest island located in the Mediterranean.[16] Through Paul's ministry, there are some Cretans who have received Jesus as their personal savior.

Titus is important to the believers in Crete because there are numerous cultural practices and distractions like lying and laziness to cause them to become ensnared in sin again. Titus is about how to strengthen the Cretan proselytes on their new Christian journey. Titus being a Gentile like the Cretans understands firsthand the importance of acceptance. Paul teaches love, the significance of inclusion. Paul commands Titus to teach sound doctrine in Crete. Paul's advocacy of sound doctrine in Titus welcomes the congregation of believers to a new discipline.

From afar, Titus has the support of his father in ministry and mentor, Paul. However, like Timothy, Titus must diffuse false teachings. Titus warns the church in Crete against arguing about the law, family lineages, and about division within their community. Paul bears witnesses to Ephesians 4: 6: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."[17]

The Book of Titus insists that believers live according to God's plan for them. For instance, Titus informs its reader to be obedient and respectful to its leaders. These instructions of honor may appear unwarranted to Crete's lying and malicious leaders.

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[15] Jouette M. Bassler*, Titus 1-5*, in The Harper Collins Study Bible, NRSV (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1989), 2029.

[16] Britannica.com, "Crete," https://www.britiannica.com/place.

[17] Bonnie Thurston, *Ephesians 4-6*, in The Interpreter's Study Bible (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003), 2094-2098.

However, the book of Titus argues that the believer must be gentle and abhor evil speaking of anyone.[18] Titus can help the reader see themselves as they may see their oppressors. The rulers, prophets, and people in Crete were foolish, disobedient, hateful and lovers of lust.[19]

Today's society resembles Crete's shocking immoral and wicked society. However, as the Book of Titus reminds each believer in Jesus that we too were once lost like the Cretans. Titus is able to inform one's understanding of conversion through salvation. In Titus, Paul contends that the believer shows humility despite the poor characteristics of others.

The convergence of love and hope in God can help believers demonstrate the humility necessary to help the lost and not condemn the lost. Titus is the praxis of God's written word to humanity. There must be a work that accompanies the word of God, and the book of Titus offers this guidance to the believer. Titus' instructions parallels James 1:22-25 in teaching the believer to be not only a hearer of the word of God but a doer of the word of God.

The biblical foundation of Titus 2:3-5 serves as a positive platform and response to the question of where are the older Christian women mentors in the church? Titus 2:3-5 may encourage older adulthood women from all walks of life to pair with the younger adulthood women in the church who are struggling, depressed, and feel alone. This paper is not about how Paul vacillates between egalitarian and misogyny, although biblical evidence may support Paul on both sides of the argument. This paper is about the

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[18] Bassler, *Titus 1-3*, 2029-2031.

[19] Bassler, *Titus 1-5*, 2029-20031.

importance of mentorship particularly between older adulthood women and younger adulthood women in my context and how to improve their relationship as well as church interaction.

Historical

Titus 2:3-5 is the seventeenth book in the New Testament. Numerous biblical scholars agree that Apostle Paul is the author of Titus. These scholars suggest that Titus was written in the 18th century from Rome. Other biblical scholars propose that Paul's letters were from Asia Minor and written before he was born.[20] Here you can see that there is no unanimity in this belief. The letter to Titus is comparable to the letters to Timothy and are commonly referred to as the Pastoral Epistles. Titus, like Timothy, is Paul's son in the ministry. Titus is a Gentile and he is first mentioned in Galatians 2:3.

Paul discipled Titus and began imparting sound doctrine to him. As Paul matriculated throughout Asia Minor, Titus traveled alongside him. The pastoral epistles mirror in teachings and addresses establishing order in the church due to false teachers. False teachers continued to be problematic for Paul as they were preaching another gospel and disrupting the church in Crete and other locations. The false teachers insisted Jews were superior to Gentiles.

Paul leaves Titus behind in Crete to secure order in the church. Crete is a Greek island that spans 160 miles long in the southern eastern part of Greece. Crete was

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[20] Jerome D. Quinn, "P46-The Pauline Canon?," CBQ 36.3 (1974): 379-85. The Muratorian Fragment differentiates between Paul's letters to seven churches and the letters he wrote "out of affection and love to Philemon, one to Titus and two to Timothy" (lines 59-60; translation provided in Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon, 1987), 305-7.

plenteous in agriculture which likely made the natives greedy per the comment from one of their prophets, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." Paul warned Titus against the immorality of the Cretans.[21]

However, the Cretans believed they were superior to Jews because of their Greek mythology. Paul's missionary excursions involved witnessing Christ's love for all people, both Jew and Gentile. Paul preached inclusiveness to anyone who believed and had faith in Jesus.[22]

Cultural and Social Background

The cultural and social aspect of Titus reveals that the Cretans were a threat to the new converts. Titus pastored in a vulnerable location. Paul is a missionary and he was imprisoned for preaching and teaching the gospel of Christ. However, at the time of Titus, Paul had been released. Although Paul has been in and out of prison for his apostate office, Paul continues to perform missionary work. Missionary work was not safe in paganistic regions. However, Paul and now Titus' role in ministry warranted that they preached in season and out season.[23] Paul leaves Titus in Crete to fulfill his new pastorate and establish the church. Crete is located in the Roman province and the inhabitants worship Greek gods. For instance, one of the famous Greek gods is Zeus.

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[21] Bassler*, Titus 12-13,* 2029.

[22] Jouette M. Bassler, *Romans 1:16*, in The Harper Collins Study Bible, NRSV, ed. Harold W. Attridge (San Francisco, CA: HarperCollins, 1989), 1911.

[23] Bassler*, Titus 1-3*, 1130.

Mark Allan Powell defined Zeus as the chief deity of the Greek pantheon or "father of gods and men."[24]

In addition to Zeus being a pseudo god, Zeus is deemed the sky god, enthroned on Mount Olympus, wielding the thunder bolt, and responsible for weather and rain.[25] Paul gives Titus a list of expectations concerning the leadership and discipleship of the church. Many theologians agree that Crete was in need of a leader and that is why the Cretans were so unruly corrupting numerous families in their community.

Paul writes to Titus about the specificities of duties for men and women. There was obviously a pecking order to observe. The pecking order rank could be because girls typically married young men ten years older than they.[26]

The hierarchy of the home was God, Christ, man, and woman. Paul was adamant about living holy for God despite the unholiness around him. Paul was challenged with unethical and immoral behavior from numerous Gentiles, for instance the Cretans, Galatians, and Corinthians.

Language

The Cretan natives spoke Greek. However, there were also Hellenistic Jews who lived in Greece and spoke fluent Greek. The Hellenistic Jews were Jews who lived

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[24] Bassler, *Second Timothy 4:1-2,* in The Harper Collins Study Bible, NRSV (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1989), 2026

[25] Mark Allen Powell*,* s.v. "zeus," *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1989) 1130.

[26] Towner, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament,* 729.

outside of Palestine, their native land, but adopted some pagan practices.[27] Therefore, Hellenistic Jews were Jews with a dual cultural background, Jewish and Greek. Some theologians argue that Judaism is the result of Hellenism. One author defined Hellenism as, "The result, in which some elements of Greek origin combined with other elements taken from conquered civilizations in various forms and degrees."[28]

As a result of Jewish descendants being abducted from their culture and forced to live in Greek speaking communities, some Hellenistic Jews were forced to learn pagan practices. However, some Jews were born into pagan culture. The Greco-Roman province became home to many Jews who were persecuted by Gentile supremacists. Due to many Jews being threatened by Roman and Babylonian rule, some Jews absconded from Jerusalem during a time called the Diaspora.

The Diaspora was likely another reason why some Jews began speaking Greek. When the lives of numerous Jews were threatened by Roman oppressors, the Jews dispersed and migrated into foreign territory; the migrating Jews were commonly known as Diaspora Jews. Hence, the Cretan Greek speaking communities were an integration of Jew and Gentile citizens. Paul spread the Good News abroad; he preached that all could receive the salvation of God. Paul exclaimed that anyone who had faith could receive the gift of salvation, to the Jew first but also to the Greek

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[27] Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2010), 14.

[28] Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity,* 14.

Major Theme

There are three major themes of Titus 2:3 -5; this passage consists of love, faith, and mentorship.

> Lastly, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink, they are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited.[29]

Titus unapologetically loves Paul because he allows Paul to assume not only a familial role but the head of the house. The head of the house could be considered Titus' covering.

Next, Paul has instructed Titus to teach what he knows, (γινώσκω)[30] to be the unadulterated word of God. Paul enforces Titus to instruct the older women to teach the younger women how to behave while at home. In other words, Titus teaches the converts to remain faithful to the holy text. Titus has experienced a longing relationship with Paul but more importantly with Jesus.

Titus is facing challenges with false teachers and lying Cretans. However, Titus, like Paul, stays the course and continues spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. Titus has been commanded by his father in ministry to create order where there does not appear to be any morality or ethics. Mentorship is my doctoral project focus. Titus 2:3-5 embodies Christian pedagogy and shows the discipline of mature Christians.

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[29] Bassler, *Titus 2:3-5*, 2029.

[30] γινώσκω, 1182. 1.689 — 1. LN 28. I know, recognize, be aware fem. (Ro 1:21); 2. LN 27.2 learn, acquire information, implying personal means (Mk 6:38); 3. LN 27.18 be familiar with, learn to know, through … *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek* (New Testament), DBLG 1182, #1 (12 times).

Key Words

The following key word list gives understanding about this text. *The Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines the term mentor as an experienced and trusted advisor.[31] The OED has published over 2,000,500 words and expressions. A mentor can also be defined as a person who emotionally, spiritually, and mentally invests in another person. Ideally, a mentor aids in the growth and development of a younger person who is less experienced.[32] The term mentor can be used as a noun or transitive verb. For an example of mentor as a verb, one acts as a mentor advising and training another individual.[33] For an example of a mentor as a noun, one can become advised and trained.[34]

Conclusion

Studying and obeying God's word is quintessential to holy living. However, living a holy life, a faithful life, is imperative for Christians who desire to live with God at His advent. The Christian needs sound doctrinal teaching and application of biblical study followed by application of biblical impartation. Paul's emphasis to his proteges, Timothy and Titus, was on teaching sound doctrine. Paul equipped Timothy and Titus with doctrinal training as well as church polity.

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[31] Wakeman, "A Christian Perspective On Mentoring," 287.

[32] OxfordEnglishDictionary.com, *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University, url.

[33] OxfordEnglishDictionary.com, *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/mentor_n.

[34] OxfordEnglishDictionary.com, *Oxford English Dictionary*, Oxford University, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/mentor_n.

In essence, Paul mentored Timothy and Titus and groomed them for growth and development in ministry. Christians who reach one and teach one can be defined as Christian mentors. I intend to examine how mentorship can be determined in the growth and development of the church, particularly with the older women and younger women.

However, there are some concerns that may impede Christian mentorship. For instance, the use of personal perspectives and persuasions can obscure the lines of ethics and morality. Paul mentored Titus without interjecting his personal agenda. One's personal feelings should not shape another's understanding of a given situation or event. The Christian mentor should be aware of the dangers of encroaching on the sphere of counseling their mentee. Paul coached Titus; he did not counsel Titus.

The Book of Titus demonstrates a unique model that embodies mentorship. Titus and his mentor, the Apostle Paul, performed ministry through productive evangelistic mission trips. Paul demonstrates interest, compassion, commitment, and love to Titus, a Gentile.

To some, women mentoring women may not be conveyed in Titus 2:3-5. The mentoring model may be esoteric, although, the biblical foundation passage between Paul and Titus and Paul and Timothy undoubtedly demonstrates mentorship. Paul was a mentor to Timothy as well Titus. Timothy was given sound advice but also explicit instructions before Paul closed his apostolic ministry. Paul does the same grooming in Titus for e Cretan converts.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

The conversation of Christian women mentorship is a relevant but rare discussion. There is notably more dialogue framing men mentorship than with women mentorship and even less with Christian women mentorship. Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC) is my context. Christian women mentorship would be an asset to the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC).

LGMBC could benefit from its older women and younger women bridging their gap of familiarity of one another's lives. LGMBC's older Christian women mentors could help to grow and develop younger Christian women who may need their guidance. My context is in a rural area called Hurdle Mills, North Carolina. Hurdle Mills has a male dominated population. Although LGMBC's women are the majority, the men at LGMBC are very much in charge. LGMBC has a flourishing ministry but there is a line of demarcation drawn between the older women and the younger women.

My context is a multigenerational congregation and there is adequate interaction among the congregation but there is not much intergenerational involvement, particularly with older and younger women. I believe that the younger women and the older women of my context can benefit from one another provided the two groups of women worked

together. If the older adulthood women mentored the younger adulthood women, it could improve the sustainability of my context.

Today, there are many mentoring models that depict older women and younger women learning from one another such as that of Maya Angelou and Oprah Winfrey and Cicely Tyson and Kimberley Elise. However, this Historical Foundations chapter will study the life works of Dorothy Height (1912-2010). Furthermore, this paper will explore Height's life and the relationships she fostered to ensure justice, equity, and inclusion for numerous Black women.

This chapter will examine the correlation of Height's life and the concerns of my context. Height's life during the Civil Rights Movement was enriched by women who were also engaged in racial discriminatory acts. Shirley Chisolm and Mary McLeod Bethune became pillars of strength and encouragement for Height.[1] However, before Height shared comparable conditions of racism with Chisolm and Bethune, Height personally suffered racism, hatred, and misogyny.

Before Height finished high school, she endured public discrimination. Height's brave and bold candor earned her threats from the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) and other hate driven organizations.[2] However, Height's outspokenness has also gained her numerous awards and worldwide recognition. This chapter will consider the norms of the era that likely shaped many African American's lives but certainly Dorothy Height's life. This

[1] Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Dorothy Height," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, April 16, 2023, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Dorothy-Height.

[2] Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Dorothy Height," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, April 16, 2023.https://www.britannica.com/biography/Dorothy-Height.

study will reveal numerous variables in Height's life and the relationships that helped her become the historical figure she is today.

This Historical Foundations chapter will focus on the influence of Height's early, middle, and late life as it pertains to helping other Black women like her. This paper will examine the era and events that helped shape Height and challenged her throughout her political career. Racism and injustice during the 1930's were immoral practices performed by individuals who believed they were superior to other ethnicities. Although Height experienced racial oppression, she was not willing to accept racial bullying.

Height's life was seemingly patterned after the numerous Civil Rights leaders that she spent time working for and with on marches and boycotts. Height began her activism at an early age. Height's personal life plans probably capitulated to the moral and ethical cause of justice and equality. This chapter examines Height's obstacles and the unusual ways she may have addressed them.

This writing will demonstrate the mentorship models in Height's life. Height aligned her life with the oppressed, ostracized, and the disenfranchised. Height's cause for justice caused others with similar interest in equality to join forces and fight hatred and injustice head on. As I share Height's life mission, I maintain that her Civil Rights efforts still support and serve African Americans today, particularly women.

Lastly, this writing will conclude with Height's advocacy for the numerous women who spoke from hidden platforms. I will demonstrate in this chapter how Height's bold and confident aura paled to her oratorical gift. This chapter will share how Height used her gift of speaking to crack glass ceilings while dismantling silos erected by many

illiterate African Americans. I intend to manifest evidence that may prove crucial to mentorship models among older adulthood women and younger adulthood women.

Height's Early Life

Dorothy Irene Height was born in Richmond, Virginia, on March 24, 1912. Height's parents were from two different states; her mother was from Virginia, and her father was a descendant of Indigenous people from North Carolina. Height's parents had suffered deaths twice of previous spouses and each of her parents had existing children. Although close to her siblings, Height was one of the younger members of her loving blended family.[3]

After Height was born, America experienced numerous detrimental transitions. America's transitions took place because of numerous variables but mostly because of hatred, fear, and injustice. Height was two years old when World War I erupted. As a result of World War I, many northern White men left their businesses and jobs behind to enlist in the war. However, in the southern states there was a different dilemma happening. Jim Crow was infiltrating Black families. Many Black families from the South retreated to northern states to fill jobs that numerous White people vacated.

To many Black people, the North appeared just as The Promised Land did to the Israelites. And just as the Israelite's had enemies in The Promised Land, so were many Whites to some Black people. White Supremacists became threatened by Black men's

[3] National Archives, "The Great Migration (1910-1970)," https://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/migrations/great-migration.

presence in vacant jobs left behind and fear ensued causing insurgent acts all over the USA.[4]

Racial rage paired with ignorance helped initiate a diaspora called the Great Migration.[5] A racial, economic, and social shift took place in the USA during the Great Migration. The Great Migration invaded numerous southern African American family's finances and ways of living. Height's parents, like numerous working African Americans, were part of the diaspora that changed the trajectory of their lives. Because of World War I, Height's family was forced to make a change.

During the Great Migration, at the age of four, Height relocated to Rankin, Pennsylvania. In comparison to other locations, Rankin, Pennsylvania, was an ideal choice to reside and rear children. Rakin had a diverse population and offered Height's parents hope in the North. Height's parents were professionals; her father was a contractor and her mother was a nurse; and they had Dorothy later in life.

Dorothy's mother was older than the younger child-bearing age when she gave birth to Dorothy.[6] The Height family experienced the Great Migration shift and the sting of segregation during their transition from the South to the North. Height and her family settled in Rankin, Pennsylvania, where she attended diverse schools and was considered academically gifted and studious.

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[4] National Archives, "The Great Migration (1910-1970)," https://www.archives.gov/research /african-americans/migrations/great-migration.

[5] National Archives, "The Great Migration (1910-1970)," https://www.archives.gov/research /african-americans/migrations/great-migration.

[6] Dorothy Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates: A Memoir* (New York, NY: Public Affairs, 2003), 1.

Rankin was segregated more than its neighboring communities and Height's parents felt safe rearing their family there. Height's school was multicultural and had White teachers. Height enjoyed school and looked forward to her daily academic challenges. However, at a young age Height faced another kind of challenge — an unexplainable disease. Height's bizarre sickness was assessed by two confirming physicians. The doctor reported to Height's mother that Height would not live to become sixteen years old. Height's sickness involved asthma and one of her toes.[7]

Height's toe would ache with pain, but despite her toe discomfort, Height persevered and in time, Height outlived the doctor's prognosis. Height overcame her death sentence but sadly, life threw her another curveball. Height was befriended by a blond haired and blue-eyed Irish Catholic eight-year-old girl.

Height's best friend devastated her worldview when she called Height a "nigger."[8] Height entrusted her broken heart to her mother's lap where she cried relentlessly. Sadly, Height's earthshattering reality in the moment of her being called the "N" word was the pivotal moment that birthed her social justice purpose. As time went on, Height found strength through friends who saw her skin color and still liked her.

However, there were times when Height would have to face the humiliation of being different. Height experienced numerous "firsts." One example, Height was the first to teach White primary children Bible stories at the Rankin Christian Center.

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[7] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 9.

[8] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates*, 12.

The Rankin Christian Center was established by the American Baptist Home Mission Society and its overseer was named Luella Adams.[9] Miss Adams had a positive influence on Height. Although Height faced negativity from racial circumstances, she could depend on Miss Adams to look for the brighter side of the spectrum.

Another first for Height, she was the first to sign up to play basketball on the Rankin High School team. Height was not athletic but tenacious and she looked forward to playing with girls from other parts of the city. However, Height and her friends were racially profiled at their basketball game causing the White team to forfeit.[10]

Thankfully again, Miss Adams was a source of encouragement for Height and her friends. Although hurt at the way White people viewed the value of her life, Height's relentlessness attitude towards bigotry and hatred propelled her to be the best version of herself. Height soon turned her attention to public speaking.

In high school, Height won numerous speech contests. Height was an esteemed speaker; she received numerous accolades from her teachers and classmates. In addition, Height won a national oratorical victory in high school. In 1928, Height was the only Black contestant in the Pennsylvania State Champion in Impromptu Speech.[11]

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[9] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 16.

[10] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 17.

[11] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 25.

Height's oratorical gift earned her a college scholarship.[12] Height graduated from high school in 1929.[13] After Height graduated from high school, she excitedly applied to Barnard College in New York to be a psychiatrist.

Height interviewed with Barnard College but unfortunately was denied acceptance. Height's plans were thwarted. Height declared Barnard College refused her admittance because of a racial quota.[14] Sadly, during that time, Barnard accepted only two Black students per year, and Height was not one of them.[15] Today, Barnard invites women of all ethnicity and backgrounds to attend their school.

Height's Middle Life

Height continued her educational pursuit at New York University and earned a bachelor's and master's in educational psychology.[16] Height came from an educated family, despite illiteracy claiming one of her favorite aunts. Height's Aunt Sally could not read or write. Height's aunt endured a traumatic encounter while visiting her.

Height seemingly enjoyed reading. However, at the age of eight, Height read a note about her aunt losing her son in a mine accident. Unsure of how to inform her aunt of the loss, Height passed the note to her mother. Height and her aunt became close during

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[12] Biography.com, "Dorothy Height," April 1, 2021, https://www.biography.com/activists/dorothy-height.

[13] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 27.

[14] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 27.

[15] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 31.

[16] National Archives, "The Great Migration (1910-1970)," https://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/migrations/great-migration.

one of the hardest times in her aunt's life. However, it was Height's mother and father who richly impacted her life. Height's father was active in politics, but it was her mother who introduced her to public affairs concerning Black women.[17]

Height attended numerous Colored women meetings religiously with her mother. On holiday weekends, Height found herself surrounded by women of the Pennsylvania Federation of Colored Women's Clubs. The genesis of The Pennsylvania Federation of Colored Women's Clubs was in 1895.[18]

As Height matriculated through life, she had several opportunities to lead her peers. Height served as the president for the Girls Reserve Club. The Girls Reserve Club was the template for what many may know today as the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). The Girls Reserves Club representatives entrusted Height with welcoming new inductees with the club's song. In addition to singing for The Girls Reserve Club inductees, Height was asked to be on The Girls Reserve Club Poster along with two White girls to advertise for the YWCA.[19]

The biracial YWCA poster was supposed to sublimely promote integration amongst the city's divided community. However, the segregated community ignored The Girls Reserve Club poster, and the YWCA declined the suggestion to integrate. Sadly, the YWCA poster did not grant Height access to its pool.

Height and her peers were disappointed that the community's response to the YWCA poster was not received. However, the YWCA poster did bring hope to Height

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[17] National Archives, "T*he* Great Migration (1910-1970)," https://www.archives.gov/research/african-americans/migrations/great-migration.

[18] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 7.

[19] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 18.

and other Black girls of The Girls Reserve Club. Height and her peers had hope that being a member of the club offered them advantages to the Black community like swimming. Unfortunately, Height and her community were denied access to a pool because they were Black, and sadly, Height never learned how to swim.[20]

Height's college years brought numerous challenges, disappointments, and exciting moments to her life. One exciting moment was when Height pledged Delta, a Greek sorority. Height had her heart set on joining the Greek sorority that was founded by four Black women. At the time of Height's interest in being a Delta, NYU's candidates did not qualify due to poor grades.[21]

Blacks did not have an organization to claim as their own at NYU. Height's opportunity to become a Delta did not happen immediately, but eventually Height did become a Delta and held the office of its president for nine years.[22] While in college, Height was also exposed to politics. Height grew to appreciate the impartation of knowledge, strength, and wisdom from those colored women's meetings. As time went on, what Height heard from those women's meetings began to shape her worldview and soon she attended other platforms of change.

One day, Height witnessed one of the state legislature representatives speak. Height and the state legislature representative had somethings in common; both she and

[20] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates*, 19.

[21] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 34.

[22] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates*, 19.

the representative were Black; and both were female. Never had Height seen such a sight, a Black elected woman politician.[23]

To Height, Black women in visible leadership roles was a phenomenon, but White women in charge was common. Unfortunately, Height saw White women in normative roles. Thankfully, today, elected Black women can be seen in numerous political roles and positions. For instance, an elected Black woman named Kamala D. Harris is the 46th Vice President of the United States of America. Vice President Harris is not only the first Black woman to serve in the second highest office in the U.S.A., but she is also the youngest. Vice President Harris is biracial, her mother is Indian, and her father is Jamaican-American.[24]

Like Height's parents, Vice President Harris' parents exposed her to social justice and the Civil Rights Movement. Harris' mother encouraged her to continue imprinting the lives of other Black women like herself. Harris was instrumental in the confirmation of Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the first Black woman to sit on the Supreme Court.[25]

The Civil Rights Movement was interesting to Height. Although Height recognized that there was a difference between her and her Caucasian classmates, Height was ignorant of the harsh realities of social injustice. As Height grew to realize the differences between her skin color and her White counterparts, she became more

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[23] National Archives, "The Great Migration (1910-1970)," https://www.archives.gov/research /african-americans/migrations/great-migration.

[24] Lisa Lerer and Sydney Ember, "Kamala Harris Makes History as First Woman and Woman of Color as Vice President," *International New York Times*, November 9, 2020, NA. *Gale Academic OneFile,* https://link.gale. com/apps/doc/A640953557/AONE?u=anon~e92b5521&sid=googleScholar&x id=207 dce85.
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[25] The White House, "Kamala Harris: The Vice President," https://www.whitehouse.gov/admin istration/vice-president-harris/.

intrigued with their immorality. However, Height became more engaged with women who looked like her — Black women. Height's life work embodied her love for people of color, but especially women of color.

The display of Black women leaders in my context can be encouraging to many Black women who desire to be in leadership. Black women leaders can inspire, inform, and instruct other potential women leaders to break color barriers and lessen age and gender discrimination in various contexts. One example of a Black woman leader is Mary Mcleod Bethune. Bethune and numerous others like her are just a few examples of what can happen when older adulthood women mentor younger adulthood women. Mary Mcleod Bethune made an enormous impact on Height in her young adult years. Height was twenty-five years old when she met Bethune in 1937. Height and Bethune's introduction took place at Bethune's National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) of which she was the founder.

Height's Later Life

Height and Bethune's meeting took place during a pivotal time in her life. Height was accompanying the thirty-second First Lady of the United States of America, Eleanor Roosevelt, to Bethune's event at the NCNW. Bethune was a Civil Rights activist, in addition to being the founder of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW).[26]

Racism and injustice ran rapidly in the sixties. Many Black people were poverty stricken and destitute. The NCNW advocated for numerous Black men and women who were treated unfairly in the workplace. On occasion, Height worked with Fannie Lou

[26] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom* Gate, 82.

Hamer, another social justice activist. Bethune invited Height to join her on the NCNW and Height accepted.

The result of Bethune's tutelage and friendship groomed Height into a leader of the NCNW. Height worked forty years as the president of the NCNW.[27] However, thirty-three years Height was also active in the Young Women's Christian Association.[28] Bethune and Height's political relationship helped strengthen their cause to accept Negro women as equals in a White world. However, it was Bethune and Height's friendship that strengthen them as Black women. Height was nurtured by Bethune and benefited from Bethune's wisdom and stature as a Black woman in a prejudicial society. Susan Hunt wrote, "A nurturer cares about the growth and development of the one being nurtured."[29] Height's political platform was enlarged because of her growth and development under Bethune.

Hunt contends that age is significant in mentoring or "Spiritual Mothering." Hunt defines Spiritual Mothering as: "When a woman possessing faith and spiritual maturity enters into a nurturing relationship with a younger woman in order to encourage and equip her to live for God's glory."[30] Height was groomed and equipped by Bethune to

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[27] Kids.britannica.com, "Dorothy Height," https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Dorothy-Height/629411.

[28] Davis W. Houck and David E. Dixon, eds., "Women and the Civil rights Movement, 1954-1965," Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009, ProQuest Ebook Central, Created from dtl on 2024-04-16, 14:58:56. 220.

[29] Susan Hunt, *Spiritual Mothering: The Titus 2 Model for Women Mentoring Women* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009), 104.

[30] Hunt, *Spiritual Mothering,* 36.

lead other Black women. Hunt is a proponent for Christian women mentorship; cultivation is vital for a healthy and nurturing relationship.[31]

Mary and Elizabeth's relationship is a biblical example of a nurturing relationship.[32] The Bible does not reveal the nurturing process that Elizabeth and Mary may have experienced. Mary spends three months with Elizabeth and the Bible does not narrate what happens in those three months. However, the change in Mary's countenance at the end of their narrative is evident of the nurturing and cultivation that Hunt references in spiritual mothering.

Hunt shares Mary's Magnificat in her book as another example of the nurturing and cultivation in her and Elizabeth's relationship.[33] Mary had a heart of praise for God after spending time with her cousin Elizabeth. Elizabeth may have reminded Mary of God's goodness the same way that Bethune reminded Height of her worth as a Black woman. Height was groomed by the many conversations she heard as a young girl. Height's mother exposed her to adult conversation during a time beyond her current age appropriation. Culturally, some Black children were seen and not heard. Many Black children did not sit around while adults were talking, yet Height's mother has her amid grown folk business.

Height was becoming cultivated and equipped with a character that could withstand the misogynistic patriarchal and bigotry that she faced later. Height may not have encountered racism like many other Blacks having attended a desegregated school at

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[31] Hunt, *Spiritual Mothering,* 101.

[32] Hunt, *Spiritual Mothering,* 99.

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[33] Hunt, *Spiritual Mothering,* 99.

a young age. However, as life would have it, Height learned an impressionable lesson from people who did not look like her. Height learned that she could be the poster child for an all-White organization, and to them, she was still just a nigger. Height could have allowed the devastation from the numerous public rebukes to become a seed for fury and hate. Height could have become what she hated.

However, Height used the many opportunities shown her by her mom, Aunt Sally, Miss Adams, and Bethune to be encouraged and continue impeding racial barriers. Height persevered as an activist but also Height achieved notable accomplishments. Height experienced numerous firsts. Height experienced many firsts in her life because she was not afraid of change or the challenge she could have faced.

Heigh advocated for Black people but unapologetically, but also, Height was open to share herself with other Black women. The YWCA and the NCNW fostered mentorships among women. However, the NCNW was a platform for women of color to work and collaborate on strategies to be accepted in a White majority world. Height's mission for women's rights was tiring but she performed her labor of love without complaining. Height served in other capacities and earned awards for her numerous achievements.

Height's inimitable character and work won her attention and recognition from numerous platforms. For example, The President Medal of Freedom. Height received the highest civilian award, The President Medal of Freedom from President Franklin D.

Roosevelt (FDR).[34] The Presidential Medal of Freedom recipients range from various levels of society and age. Upon bestowing this award, President Obama said,

> The Presidential Medal of Freedom is not just our nation's highest civilian honor — it's a tribute to the idea that all of us, no matter where we come from, have the opportunity to change this country for the better. From scientists, philanthropists, and public servants to activists, athletes, and artists, these 21 individuals have helped push America forward, inspiring millions of people around the world along the way.[35]

Height also won the Spingarn Medal (NAACP). The NAACP bestowed The Spingarn Medal upon Height in 1993. The Spingarn award was named after the late Joel Elias Spingarn.[36] Height won the Citizen's Medal from the Reagan as well as the 2004 Congressional Gold Medal. In 1961, Height worked with President John Fitzgerald Kennedy on behalf many women. President John F. Kennedy designated Height for the President's Commission on the Status of Women.[37]Height's task for the President's Commission on the Status of Women was multifaceted. Height examined the culture and the social status of everyday women, the problematic lives of Negro women, as well as the lives of numerous privileged women. Height worked closely with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt to accomplish various tasks for her role with the President's Commission on the Status of Women.[38]

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[34] Davis W. Houck and David E. Dixon, eds., "Women and the Civil rights Movement, 1954-1965," Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009, ProQuest Ebook Central, Created from dtl on 2024-04-16, 14:58:56. 220.

[35] The White House, "The Presidential Medal of Freedom," https://obamawhitehouse. archives.gov/camp aign/medal-of-freedom#:~:text=The%20Presidential%20Medal%20of%20Free dom%20is%20the %20Nation's% 20highest%20civilian.significant%20public%20or%20private%20 endeavors.

[36] NAACP, "Resolution: NAACP Honors the Life of Dr. Dorothy Irene Height," https:// naacp.org/resourc es/naacp-honors-life-dr-dorothy-irene-height.

[37] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 92.

[38] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 92.

Conclusion

Height's life embodied the risks and rewards that are common to mentorship: sacrifice and stewardship. When one mentors, there may be risks, but there may also be rewards. Height's mother mentored her by exposing her to various civil rights conversations. At a young age, Height was being groomed for political leadership by Bethune and others who saw her potential. There are suitable mentors among the older Christian women in the LGMBC. LGMBC has a diverse population of professional as well as retired older Christian women. For example, the first woman chief of police is a LGMBC member. The retired police chief in our congregation was the first woman and certainly only Black woman to ever oversee a predominantly White police force.

Another example of an ideal mentor among our retired Christian woman used to be an administrator for a large health organization. The LGMBC has retired teachers, school administrators, and a physician that would be exceptional to mentor younger adulthood women within my context. The LGMBC has a plethora of younger adulthood Christian women who may benefit from the support and close guidance of older Christian women.

The younger adulthood Christian women of LGMBC may be in the music ministry, hospitality ministry, or the audio/video ministry, but are also struggling in areas where the older Christian women can help them. Life's experiences are how Height became more aware of racism. Had Height's White best friend not called her a nigger, Height may not have seen the world as black and white, but as gray.

Change is sometimes the positive result of conflict and challenge. Height faced numerous conflicts and challenges and change was the fruit. Like Height, my context

faces its share of conflicts and challenges; however, change is dismal. As prior referenced, my context is situated in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina. Hurdle Mills has and continues to experience a high racial climate. In 2020, a local pastor addressed similar racist acts performed locally in Hurdle Mills and throughout the world. The local pastor was appealing for change in the LGMBC community.

Unfortunately, some of the LGMBC's younger adulthood Christian women congregants live alone in sub-standard housing. Some younger adulthood Christian women are either living alone or have live-in partners and together face the challenges and conflicts of racism in LGMBC's community. For instance, poor jobs, housing, recreational venues, and even the Internet are inferior in many communities where LGMBC's younger adulthood resides.

Living under direst circumstances can be difficult for some, but it does not have to be an impossible situation. When there is someone who has been through similar circumstances and has successfully come out on the other side, that someone is now able to navigate and support someone else. However, those who have gone through a demanding situation must be willing to share their experiences and their expertise in that situation.

The sharing of knowledge and experiences can substantiate a mentorship. The LGMBC older adulthood Christian women have quintessential experiences to share with countless younger adulthood Christian. I chose Dorothy Height as my Historical Foundations' subject because out of all the hatred, misogyny, prejudicial treatment that she endured, Height remained a force to be reckoned with. Height's internal light of hope for diversity, equality, and inclusion never went out.

Height's gentle giant demeanor demanded the attention of any room she entered. Height shared with Black women audiences a better way to fight for a seat at the table. Height's story may compel old and young women to work together for the common good. Bethune imparted knowledge, training, and disclosure of her brainchild, the NCNW, to Height.

I am confident there is a Mary McLeod Bethune and a Dorothy Height within the hallowed walls of the LGMBC. There are opportunities available for the younger adulthood Christian woman in LGMBC, but she must be willing to be vulnerable and receive the mentoring. The same is true for the older adulthood Christian woman; she must be willing to nurture and share with another younger version of herself. Height's memoir provides a mentorship model for a lot of Black women — young and old. Bethune and Height's version of older and younger adulthood Christian women mentorship helps solidify the need for spiritual mothering[39] within many Black churches.

Height's mother provided her foundation for learning about life and its unexpected ways. Height's mother gave her direction through her pain and suffering when she faced rejection. The younger adulthood Christian women in LGMBC have sometimes faced rejection and Height's story may help them overcome their pain and suffering.

I contend that Height's memoir will be an illumination in the dark lives of numerous women. There may be younger women from LGMBC who are living in darkness because of depression. Other women may not have the courage and strength to face their disappointments like Height displays in her book.

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[39] Hunt, *Spiritual Mothering,* 91.

Height's book may show an older woman how to befriend a younger woman through candid conversation. Bethune was an amiable person, and she addressed Height and assigned her a role in her organization before Height knew anything about her new position. Maybe there is younger adulthood Christian woman at LGMBC who will allow a similar transition in their life.

The LGMBC ministry will be more expansive and productive when there is a bilateral support system in place. When ideas, experiences, skills, and abilities are shared among the congregation and its leadership, the LGMBC can become more connected. Christian women mentorship can equip LGMBC to become stronger in its attempt to overcome the racism in its community.

Height demonstrated an effective way to inoculate the virus of racism; she paired with others who were already engaged in battle. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt paired with Height on numerous endeavors. Roosevelt's guidance and influence also helped to shape Height's political formation. LGMBC has a powerful ministry. How much stronger can LGMBC's ministry become with women of wisdom edifying younger women with creative minds and eager spirits for change?

Height worked with FDR during a highly racial era. Negroes were being hung. Many Black protestors responded to the senseless lynchings of Black people by rioting. FDR's political position was questioned by NAACP leaders: however, while FDR's White counterparts questioned his alliance with them, FDR continued to offer a platform for the consideration of Negro families.[40]

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[40] Height, *Open Wide the Freedom Gates,* 82.

My context has experienced racial tension from some of its White residents. There are White residents in the LGMBC community who believe the color of their skin is superior to Blacks. However, there are some anti hate organizations that advocate for people of brown and black skin. Roosevelt aided Height in dismantling some racial biases. However, the work of eliminating the stinge of racism is not done, but the mantle is passed down from generation to generation.

Height's extraordinary story fosters mentorship through guidance, nurturing and companionship. My context will benefit from the collaborative edge of uniting older adulthood women and younger adulthood women in mentorship. My context will hopefully grow exponentially as other young adulthood women see the benefits of gleaning from older adulthood women and as older adulthood women and younger adulthood women share thoughts and ideas about everything from life skills to leadership. I hope to share what I have discovered about mentorship through Bethune and Height with other brown and black Christian women. Height's mentorship with Bethune is efficacious for women who want to be successful leaders but surely helpful for women who want to impact the world in a huge manner.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This Theological Foundations unit will survey how theological findings can equip my ministry context, the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC), located in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina. The older women and the younger women of LGMBC have a disjointed association because the younger women are not equipped to facilitate ministerial functions. If the older women embraced the younger women, the older women could share their knowledge. The older women could learn more about them, discover that they have more in common with the younger women, and edify LGMBC's ministry.

Numerous theological implications in this chapter will help give clarity about the context's biblical perspectives as well as convey its understanding about the developmental stages of humans. This chapter will utilize some theological topics in accordance with the United Theological Seminary's Doctor of Ministry dissertation project. This Theological Foundations chapter will investigate relational theology, theological anthropology, ecclesiology, womanist theology, and the impact their influence offers undergirding this overall thesis and proposed project.

Fredrica H. Thompsett referenced theology as a habit of studying GOD,[1] while Paul Badham argues that theology literally means, "thinking about GOD."[2] Badham also contends that the definition of theology relies on the application of both biblical doctrine and Christian disciplines such as the Creeds.[3] For instance, The Apostles' Creeds are Christian beliefs that undergird Baptist traditions.[4] Theology can be viewed as a staple biblical foundation or as a rudimentary basis for theological understanding. Throughout this chapter, arguments from numerous relational theologians will be investigated.

This Theological Foundations chapter will also explore various aspects of theology through the lens of ecclesiology and womanist theology. This chapter will examine how ecclesiology and womanist theology integrates relational theology, biblical doctrine, and human intellect. Relational theology demonstrates how GOD interacts with humanity. Relational theology should not be confused with open relational theology. Open theology allows one to deduce understanding of GOD based on their personal views and not from biblical persuasion.

This chapter will also survey information about theological anthropology and the unique way it may impact my context. Theological anthropology helps clarify the relationship between GOD and humanity. This chapter will consider a plethora of books and online resources to reveal their arguments about relational theology, theological

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[1] Fredrica Harris Thompsett, *We Are Theologians Strengthening the People of GOD*, Seabury Classics (New York, NY: Church Publishing Incorporated, 2004), ix.

[2] P. Badham, "What Is Theology?" *Theology* 99, no. 788 (1996):101-106. https://doi.org/10.1177/0040571X9609900203.

[3] P. Badham, "What Is Theology?" *Theology* 99, no. 788 (1996):101-106. https://doi.org/10.1177/0040571X9609900203.

[4] Logos Staff, "The Apostles' Creed: Its History and Origin," January 18, 2022, https://www.logos.com/grow/the-apostles-creed-its-history-and-origins/.

anthropology, ecclesiology, and womanist theology. Finally, this chapter will define terms such as theology, relational theology, theological anthropology, ecclesiology, and womanist theology. This unit will pursue clarity of relational theology, theological anthropology, and its lens womanist theology, and ecclesiology as they pertain to the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

An Overview and Relatedness of Chosen Theological Themes

This section will review the origin and concept of relational theology. This section will study the praxis of biblical scripture in the Christian's life and examine how biblical scripture shapes one 's relationship with GOD and with others. Learning and applying biblical scripture daily may offer a perspective of GOD that may be otherwise missed. This chapter will allow how understanding about relational theology is essential to equipping and developing one's relationship with GOD and His creation. Relational theology can demonstrate insightful information about GOD'S relationship to humanity. Next, this chapter peers through the lens of theological anthropology. Theological anthropology demonstrates the human side of a relationship with GOD. Understanding how we as humans are created is just as important as knowing why we as humans are created. Humanity has a purpose for existence other than worldly pleasures.

This chapter will discuss the aspects of theological anthropology as it determines that humanity is created in the *Imago Dei*. In Latin, the "image of GOD" is translated, *Imago Dei.*[5] In this chapter, we will peruse humanity's creation in Genesis 1:26-27 for its

[5] Ray Frazer, "The Origin of the Term 'Image,'" *English Literary History (ELH)* 27, no. 2 (June 1960): 149-161, https://www.jstor.org/stable/2871916.

relevancy about theological anthropology. This chapter will also explore GOD'S expectation of humanity as His creation.

Finally, this chapter will explore theology through the lens of ecclesiology. Ecclesiology is a derivative of the word *ecclesia,*[6] the Greek word for church. Fr. John Behr, in his article "Our Mother Church: Mary and Ecclesiology," contends that the Hebrew word *qahal* denotes a "convoked group."[7] This unit will explore diverse meanings of the term church as it pertains to a body of believers in JESUS or a building.

Relational Theology

This section will peruse arguments pertinent to the context's dilemma and charge from a woman's perspective. This chapter will discuss common views from men and women theologians about womanist theology. This unit will investigate how GOD views women and vice-versa through the doctrine of womanist theology.

The expected outcome of the LGMBC's older women and younger women's fragmented relationship may be hinged to learning more about the aspects of theology. This chapter will examine theology from the standpoint of Christian beliefs and other's religiosity. Investigating relational theology may help to bridge the widening gap between the older women and younger women in my context because this theological lens illuminates GOD's character from the Bible.

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[6] *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, s.v. "*ecclesia*," https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ecclesia.

[7] John Behr, "Our Mother Church: Mary and Ecclesiology," February 2023, 333-344, https://doi.org/10.1080/1474225x2023.2168868.

The Bible is GOD'S own word concerning humanity and His connection to His creation. Women were created secondary to man, but GOD did not create a secondary humanity. Creation was not established in order of importance. Today many may believe that one's gender, ethnicity, or lifestyle can denote one's superiority over another's race. However, GOD alone as creator and ruler of heaven and earth is superior to humanity, yet GOD cares for and loves humanity. Humanity's willingness to care, support, respect, and love for one another should mirror GOD's love for humanity.

Humanity has not performed the best depiction of GOD'S love. GOD created humanity to love one another as HE loves us, caring for one another unconditionally so that we might see GOD as well. From the beginning of creation, GOD desired a relationship with humanity.

GOD encapsulated humanity into His plan for procreation. but man sinned against GOD. Despite humanity's sinful nature, GOD still provided an eternal place for humanity's destination with HIM. However, while humanity is on earth there is work to do, places to go, and an almighty GOD to see in each one of us. However, GOD considered humanity's physiological needs and created companions for them to share with.

Genesis 2:18 reveals GOD'S evident concern for humanity. Adam was a solo representation of GOD'S image. GOD fashioned a woman after HIS likeness as well as companion for Adam. God Said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner'"[8] (NRSV). Genesis 2:18 further clarifies that GOD understands that humanity can be alone despite His presence. Thomas Jay Oord insists

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[8] *Thomas Nelson Study Bible, NKJV* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 9.

that relational theology is exemplary in one's theological formation of GOD'S devotion to humanity. Oord lists the following as significant relational affirmations of GOD'S behavior towards humanity:

1. GOD affects creatures in various ways. Instead of being aloof and detached, GOD is active and involved in relationship with others. GOD relates to others. GOD relates to us, and that makes an essential difference.

2. Creatures affect GOD in various ways. While GOD'S nature is unchanging, creatures influence the loving and living Creator of the universe. We relate to GOD, and creation makes a difference to GOD. [9]

Oord's analysis of GOD'S relationship to humanity conveys a diverse, divine fellowship, and followship of GOD'S order for creation. Oord's above explanation of GOD'S interaction with humanity is depicted throughout the Holy Bible. The Bible serves as the template by which humanity and its Creator are to commune and fellowship.

The Bible also informs humanity of life's dilemmas and challenges. However, the Bible also demonstrates how to address life's many quandaries. There is a plethora of answers in the Bible.

For instance, how to live and let live, how to love and how to let go of anger is in the Bible. The Bible is a handbook for humanity to learn how to live with one another and how to live with GOD. The Bible is designed to bring humanity closer together with one another, but most of all, the Bible is equipped to bring humanity into GOD'S promise. GOD communicates with HIS people, HIS beloved through HIS word.

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[9] Brent Montgomery, Thomas Jay Oord, and Karen Winslow, *Relational Theology: A Contemporary Introduction* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012), 2.

I have discovered three perspectives that may bring clarity about relational theology. First, relational theology serves as a foundational tool in developing understanding about GOD'S creation story and how humanity is an integral part of that story. Second, relational theology indicates GOD as Creator with a multifaceted character. Third, relational theology may serve as another way to shape one's interpretation of self.

The three perspectives mentioned above may prove instrumental for one's own comprehension about their relationship with GOD but also serve as a portal to learn the aspects of humanity's relationship to one another. The revelation of relational theology also may give insightfulness about human relationships and its influence in mentorship among women. GOD demonstrates in His word the power of relationship with humanity beginning with Adam. In Hebrew, the name Adam (*adam*, "human"), refers to all humanity[10] inclusively and not merely one man as is indicated in Genesis chapter 2: 7 through chapter 4.

GOD encapsulates humanity into His plan for procreation. Humanity is a steward of GOD'S world. Yet, the sovereign Creator, the divine and righteous GOD, communes with humanity on their low level as GOD'S creation. The ability to broaden one's borders for another's admittance can exemplify a GOD likeness. A healthy relationship that fosters godly attributes will likely equip one with integrity and good moral judgment.

Relational theology is foundational learning for mentorship. Not only is relational theology foundational to mentorship, but relational theology is also essential to mentorship. For instance, relational theology can undergird mentorship with godly

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[10] BibleGateway, s.v. "adam," Genesis 2: 7; 4, www.biblegateway.com.

principles and practices, like praying for one another, confiding in one another, forgiving one another, sharing, and teaching one another. Relational theology might help define biblical parameters for numerous religious relationships. How, and why GOD interacts with His creation embodies the importance of relationship with others on this earth. Relationship is a byproduct of relational theology since humanity is produced from GOD and Adam's relationship. There is a myriad of theologies, however, Relational theology may be one of the most relative to Christians' belief system. Christians are believers of theology and soteriology.

Relational theology is not about the feelings of GOD as some might surmise. Oord contends that sometimes humanity cross matches personalities and feelings to describe GOD'S position towards humanity.[11] GOD'S connection to humanity should be a driving force to reverse wrong thoughts and bad behaviors that we as humans sometimes have for one another.

While being connected to a perfect and holy GOD, humanity can still sometimes find fault in one another and with one another. Sometimes humanity may have the expectation to be identical to the perfect GOD we are connected to. The mere fact that an imperfect people is connected to a perfect GOD seems unreasonable.

In fact, knowing that GOD is perfect but is connected to humanity who is imperfect can be viewed as the sole example of acceptance, inclusion, and love. Humanity's relationship with one another can sometimes fail in acceptance of one another's differences. Humanity can see one another with prejudicial perspectives, and these prejudicial perspectives may sometimes cause division.

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[11] Montgomery, Oord, and Winslow, *Relational Theology*, 3.

However, humanity's relationship with GOD must be firmly rooted in acceptance and inclusion of GOD in every facet of our life. Acceptance and inclusion of GOD in our lives can likely result in humanity accepting and including one another. Theology can encapsulate an understanding about how one may view GOD as well as their relationship with GOD and HIS creation. Through GOD'S unfailing love for humanity, HE has shown humanity how to love and how to relate to one another.

Personalities and feelings may adequately define humanity but barely scratch the surface for describing GOD'S connection to humanity. At best, humanity imitates GOD and not GOD imitating humanity; anything else obfuscates understanding about the deity of GOD.

GOD'S perfect nature is not tainted by humanity's sinful nature but atones humanity's sinful nature. GOD'S selfless love for humanity redeems humanity from eternal damnation and makes humanity a righteous people. The love of GOD for humanity evoked the sacrifice of GOD for humanity thus promoting a relationship between HE and humanity.

Derek Flood, the author of *Relational Theology: A Contemporary Introduction*, declares that understanding atonement is primal to understanding relationship. Humanity's ability to bond may rest on the laurels of atonement. Humanity was lost and in need of help because of sin. GOD mentored humanity with HIS compassion and guidance. Mentorship can be time consuming, but mentorship can also be an opportunity

to extend compassion and guidance to someone in need. GOD'S love for all humanity should make relationships less challenging.[12]

Challenges may accompany relationships, but the ebbs and flows of relationships do not compare to the love GOD relays to humanity. "But GOD proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us." (Romans 5: 8 NRSV).

Relational theology conveys GOD'S giving and receiving to humanity. Humanity is GOD'S priority. Humanity was lost and in need of help because of sin. GOD mentored humanity with HIS compassion and guidance.

The image of GOD is packaged in HIS people, GOD'S imprint within us is an eternal marker to remind us of GOD'S love for us. However, GOD releases HIS people to choose between HE and the world. Sadly, the world sometimes appears to claim GOD'S creation for itself.

However, when humanity makes the mistake to choose the world instead of following GOD, GOD yet loves and cares about humanity, the only creation made in GOD'S image. As we see ourselves in GOD and one another, we must pattern our lives after GOD'S love for us. Mentorship is one way to pattern our lives after GOD'S relationship with men and women.

For brevity's sake of this section, GOD'S relationship with women, particularly, Black women, will be closely examined through the womanist lens. Theology through the womanist lens encompasses a declarative and unapologetically perspective of Black women and the view that shapes their life.

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[12] Derek Flood, *Relational Theology: A Contemporary Introduction* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2012), 40.

Womanist Theology

Womanist theology, as defined by Katie Cannon, "is a theology derived from the context, voice, action, and agency of Black women of the African Diaspora. It is grounded in but also is a critique of the failings of Black (overtly male) and feminist (overtly white female) liberation theologies that preceded it."[13] Alice Walker produced the term womanist.[14] A womanist view appears through a lens and reveals the world as seen by Black people.

Alice Walker, Renita J. Weems, and Katie Cannon are proponents of the womanist perspective. However, Weems and Cannon give illumination of GOD'S word through the perspective of womanist theology that may define GOD'S relationship with Black women. GOD'S demonstration of love toward women can be witnessed in the Bible. However, declaring the expression of GOD'S love toward Black women specifically is arguably the pleasure of numerous womanist theologians. Renita J. Weems is the first womanist biblical scholar.[15] Weems advocates for the integrity, presence, and voice for many Black women but also for the liberative power to see herself essential in the biblical narrative.

Weems interprets in her book, *Just A Sister Away*, the many biblical relationships through a womanist lens. Weems argues how Black women as Civil Rights activists and "certain women" in the Bible were not recognized by history recorders as noteworthy.[16]

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[13] Diana L. Hayes, "Womanist Theology," *St. Andrews Encyclopedia of Theology*, 2002, 3, ed. Brendan N. Wolfe et al, https://www.saet.ac.uk/Christianity/WomanistTheology.

[14] Hayes, "Womanist Theology," 5.

[15] Hayes, "Womanist Theology," 10.

[16] Renita J. Weems, *Just A Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible* (San Diego, CA: Lura Media, 1988), 94.

Weems insisted that there were biblical accounts involving women who were mentioned because of their sexuality. For instance, like the woman who anointed Jesus' feet with oil and her hair (Luke 7:36-50).[17]Weems' argument that women were exploited more than celebrated is not entirely false. However, Jesus in another gospel speaks these words to support the act of the woman who anoints His feet with her hair: "Truly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her" (Matthew 26:13).

Womanist theology may advocate for brown and black daughters, sisters, aunties, nieces, grandmothers, mothers, and girlfriends who dare to see themselves celebrated just as their white counterparts. Black women who mentor Black women can likely bear witness to one another's struggles and dilemmas as probably many of their ancestors experienced. For example, Cannon comments on how numerous "foremothers" like Fannie Lou Hamer and Sojourner Truth trailblazed paths that many Black women tread today.[18]

Womanist theology extends a welcome invitation for Black women to learn of their past, present, and future through various discourses led by women like Walker, Cannon and Weems. However, for another perspective, Black women whose primal objective is discounting the "whitemalegod"[19] that many white evangelicals depicted to Black people consider Dr. Christena Cleveland. Cleveland is a womanist activist and

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[17] Weems, *Just A Sister Away,* 94.

[18] Hayes, "Womanist Theology," 13.

[19] Christena Cleveland, *GOD is a Black Woman* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2022), 41.

author who discusses in her book her escapade to France to learn the truth about who GOD really is.

A plethora of Black women gravitate to a gospel that represents them. The deep need to understand a creator who has their best interest at heart may propel many women of color to seek the truth for themselves. Seeing GOD from many perspectives may impact one's identity.

GOD'S identity may be legitimized by numerous Black women who visualize Him as either a loving GOD or a "white-male-god." Womanist theology may be culturally shaped because of the many stories and experiences spoken by various Black women; however, this theology has become a mirror for numerous Black women to see themselves as GOD sees them.

Theological Anthropology

Theological anthropology confronts the role and responsibilities of GOD'S humanity. Dr. Charles Cameron defines theological anthropology this way: "anthropology concerns itself with understanding human experience, and theology is concerned with GOD."[20] Biblical sources denote that humanity is made in the image of GOD (Genesis 1:27).[21]

Scripture reveals that GOD is the maker of humanity: both male and female. Yet, GOD is also a triune GOD — GOD the Father, GOD the SON, and GOD the HOLY

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[20] Charles M. Cameron, "An Introduction to Theological Anthropology," *Evangel* 23, no. 2 (Summer 2005): 53, http://www.theologicalstudies.org.uk/.

[21] Harold W. Attridge, "Genesis 1:27," *Harper Collins Study Bible* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 1989), 6.

GHOST (Genesis 1:26).[22] GOD declares that humans have a responsibility and an accountability to HIM to care for other individuals and other things — things on the earth, in the sea, and in the air. Humanity's authority to govern the earth is a commandment.

However, culture can influence creation. In the Bible, the Israelites and their enemies are each inferior to GOD. Israel is GOD'S firstborn son, but they are sinful and therefore are derailed from GOD'S plan for their lives (Exodus 4:22-23).[23] Israel's enemies, though created in GOD's image, sin as well. The sinful nature of humanity is GOD's enemy, yet GOD loves the sinner. How does a loving and holy GOD love a sinful creature as humanity made in His image — the *Imago Dei*?

The image of GOD is a matter of viewpoint. To the poor maybe God is a compassionate sower; to the motherless, maybe God is a desired child; to the brideless, maybe God is a wife to be adorned; to Christena Clevelands, maybe GOD is a Black woman. Does the Triune GOD conclude for dichotomists that humanity is a trichotomy? GOD'S appearance is just as diverse as His characteristics. Humanity's emotions and temperament may be innate while each generation likely reinvents itself. However, the peculiarity of GOD'S children conveys a loved and cherished people by GOD (Deuteronomy 14:2).[24] GOD'S children are those who obey Him. Being obedient to GOD

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[22] Harold W. Attridge, "Genesis 1:26," *Harper Collins Study Bible* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 1989), 6.

[23] Harold W. Attridge, "Exodus 4:22-23," *Harper Collins Study Bible* (New York, NY: HarperOne:1989), 91.

[24] Harold W. Attridge, "Deuteronomy 14:2," *Harper Collins Study Bible* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 1989), 278.

is essential to being His son or daughter. However, misinterpretation of various biblical texts may validate some in a misogynistic and chauvinistic world.

Titus 2: 5 instructs the older women to teach the younger women "to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of GOD may not be discredited."[25] The above scripture passage and others like it may be why some women are revered as servants and not credible enough to be in the image of a strong GOD. Titus 2:5 demonstrates Paul's concern for new Christian converts. This biblical passage directly involves experienced Christian women to impart the ways of the church to other women of the faith.

Women of every social class, financial status, and educational background is made in the image of GOD and expected to invest in other women. In some churches, women are muted and prevented from leadership roles such as pastor. For example, the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) male dominated body has not as one voice accepted the invitation of women leading the church. The Christian Post reported "The majority of Southern Baptist messengers were left disappointed Wednesday by the failure of a proposed amendment to the Southern Baptist Convention's constitution to permanently ban women from serving as pastors" as qualified by Scripture. 61% of messengers who cast ballots at America's largest Protestant denomination's Annual Meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, voted in favor of the proposed amendment to the SBC's

[25] Attridge, "Titus 2:5," 2029.

constitution known as the Law Amendment. The proposal needed 66.66% of the votes to be ratified. About 38%, or 3,185 messengers, opposed the motion."[26] (The Christian Post)

Ecclesia

The foundation of the world including the church is likely created on the premises of GOD'S love. The word "church" in the Greek, *ekklesia,* means "assembly" or "gathering"[27] — *ek* meaning "out of" and *kaleo* meaning "I call" — those called out by GOD.[28] The word church relates more to disciples and not to brick and mortar. The church is a living organism and JESUS CHRIST is the chief cornerstone as indicated in Ephesians 2:19-22.[29] However, the mission of the church is conveyed in biblical references. For instance, in the New Testament, Matthew 28:18-20 says explicitly that Jesus is the authority — whether in heaven or on earth, of everything and everyone. In Genesis 1:26, man is given authority over GOD'S creation; however, man is to be a representative of GOD and not a cheap replica of GOD. Maybe this is why churches should not reside under the subjection of religious dictators who may declare they are GOD of their parishioners. Church overseers and its congregants are accountable to GOD for their service.

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[26] Leonardo Blair, "Baptist Women in Ministry Praise Failed SBC Ban on Female Pastors as Mike Law vows to Fight On," *The Christian Post*, June 13, 2024, https://www.christianpost.com/news/baptist-women-in-ministry-praise-failed-sbc-ban-on-female-pastors.html.

[27] Powell, *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary*. 134.

[28] BibleHub, s. v. "ekklesia," Strong's Greek, 2564 kaleo-I call, www.biblehub.

[29] Harold W. Attridge, "Ephesians 2:19-22," *Harper Collins Study Bible* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 1989), 985.

The church must teach the ways of GOD to the community and to the uttermost parts of the earth. It is the church's responsibility to evangelize and disciple the unsaved. The word "church" is an English word that comes from the Greek word *kuriache*, "those who are possessed by the *kurios*," or "Lord."[30] The nature of the church is one of unity and community.[31] The church is a collected body of believers who are in a relationship with GOD. The church can be seen as a reflection of GOD'S love. The purity of the church is the ultimate objective of Jesus' return. Jesus is coming back to receive His bride; and the church is in waiting for her groom, Jesus.[32]

The mission of the church rests on GOD'S children, those who are commissioned to represent the *Imago Dei*. Theologian Karl Barth insists that "the church is community or congregation rather than society; but also, the church is divine and human activity."[33] At times humanity misrepresents the *Imago Dei*. Wayne Grudem argues when Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, humanity marred GOD's image in their life.[34] However, at the advent of Christ, the return of Jesus, the *Imago Dei* will be restored.[35]

Humanity's pursuit to become more like GOD and less like the world is a continual effort. The effort to look more like the *Imago Dei* insists that humanity denies itself to carnality and live obediently to the holy writ. Living obediently to GOD'S word

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[30] Mark Borja Lord, "A Systematic Study in Christian Theology," February 12, 2015, Dissertation, https://markblord.wordpress.com.

[31] Attridge, "Ephesians 4:4," 1986-1987.

[32] Attridge, "Ephesians 4:4," 1986-1989.

[33] Craig Carter, "Karl Barth's Revision of Protestant Ecclesiology," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1995): 35-44.

[34] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 444.

[35] Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 444.

about morality may come with unbeatable challenges and sometimes sin wins. However, even people who sin and miss the mark of GOD'S respect and honor are made in the *Imago Dei*.

Humanity is exempt from living like animals. GOD created only one creature in His image. Just like GOD, humanity has emotions. GOD became angry with humanity's sinful nature and passed judgment to flood the earth and its inhabitants.[36] However, humanity makes mistakes and GOD does not. Humanity fell and failed in a garden, but GOD sent His son Jesus to save humanity and restore the *Imago Dei*. When Jesus returns, each believer will see Him and themselves as GOD intended, in HIS image.

Conclusion

Theology and its variants, relational theology and theological anthropology, give sufficient clarity for understanding humanity's relationship with GOD as well as GOD'S connection with humanity. How one interprets the Bible about their life can sharpen or cloud one's perspective of GOD. Social norms can shape humanity's morality but may alter GOD'S transformative plan for humanity.

Humanity has from the beginning of creation distorted the image of GOD; sin had left a crimson stain in humanity, but we are yet in the *Imago Dei*. However, as numerous as there are people upon the earth, there is but one GOD who created humanity in HIS image. The Bible teaches the continual work of the church and the love of God that commissioned HIS son Jesus to die and become resurrected for the sake of humanity's salvation. GOD resides in the best and worst of those who are in HIS likeness. The

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[36] Attridge, "Genesis 6-7," 13-14.

church offers to the awaiting community the product of Jesus' commission to each saint; each disciple must go and make more disciples after the lessons of Christ.

Ecclesiology and womanist theology are specific scopes of theological praxis explored in this section. Ecclesiology confirms the church as the nucleus of GOD'S kingdom. The nature of the church dictates the role and duties of GOD'S people. Church integrates worship, administration, instruction, and proclamation of GOD'S word for HIS people from every generation. Womanist theology gives insight about how the relationship between humanity and GOD grants full accessibility as HIS sons and daughters. In a misogynist and chauvinistic world, daughters from every region, but especially Black daughters, look for GOD in one another and in the world around them.

Some Black daughters may need to see GOD as daddy and themselves as HIS baby girl before they can trust GOD. The god that White America introduced to many Black men and women, but primarily to Black women, did not include them in HIS liberative narrative. Older Black women who seek to mentor younger Black women may need to address the implications of punitive damage that can result from a patriarchal society.

Christena Clevelands brings a fresh and bold perspective about GOD and her pursuit to France to explore the truth about GOD. Clevelands discovered the richness of her spirituality through the history of the Black Madonna. Clevelands testimony can be shared with other young Black women who likely have the same plight with a "whitemalegod." One can understand GOD as an advocate against slavery and therefore a protagonist for liberation. GOD's advocation freed His people from Pharoah, delivered Israel from bondage, and came to rescue humanity from enslavement. GOD did not likely

set humanity free to see them enslaved again to their own devices or condemned by one another.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

My context is the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC) located in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina. Participation in ministry by young female members from the age group twenty to thirty has steadily decreased over the past twenty-five years at Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church. If female members from the ages of forty to sixty years participate in mentorship training, then they will be equipped to serve as spiritual mentors to the younger female members of the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

This chapter seeks to discuss and to determine the efficacy of mentor-mentee relationships. This unit will explore how Christian women aged thirty to sixty years old engage in relationship. Examining relationships in various degrees and disciplines may elaborate on the challenges and rewards of mentorship.

This chapter will examine human behavior and cognitive functions by reviewing Ian Barbour's scientific model of integration, interdigitating three of Erik Erikson's nine psychosocial human development areas, and Jean Piaget's fourth stage of cognitive development. Erikson and Piaget's theories may help to illuminate the complexities of human development at various stages of life and may demonstrate some reasons for difficulties in mentoring.

This area explores Erikson's personal profile and how it helped shape his perspective on human growth. Understanding how human development impacts relationships is essential to mentorship. This doctoral project seeks to illuminate the practicality and proficiency of partnership through mentorship.

Numerous testimonials confirmed that mentorship can be instrumental in various settings. For instance, educationally, athletically, and organizational settings have proven to benefit from the advocacy that mentorship can offer. This chapter will offer critical understanding about the stages of human development. The ministerial development of the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church is compartmentalized. Although Lattisville Grove's women's ministry is populated by a substantial group of Christian women from all ages and background, there is little cohesiveness among the group.

Without nurturing relationships among the women at Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church, a unified women's ministry may be difficult. This section seeks to determine the efficacy of mentorship among the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church women's congregants. Research indicates that Black Baptist women, historically Black Protestants, outnumber its male cohorts 59% to 41%.[1] Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist is situated in rural Hurdle Mills, North Carolina, and its women-to-men's ratio is comparable to the above research.[2] This section may help to educate numerous women about their diversities and similarities.

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[1] Pew Research Center, "Gender Composition by religious group," https://www.pewresearch.org/religious-landscape-study/database/gender-composition/.

[2] Point2, Hurdle Mills, NC Demographics," https://www.point2homes.com/US/Neighborhood/NC/Hurdle-Mills-Demographics.html.

The basis of this project is to solidify commonalities among older women and younger women despite their age difference. Commonalities like fear, hope, joy, and the need for safety can be experienced in human stages of life. This unit will explore and compare human development and cognitive theories.

Psychology

Psychology is the interdisciplinary lens through which other disciplines can be understood like psychosocial behavior. Timothy J. Legg agrees with the American Psychology Association's definition, "Psychology is the study of the mind and behavior, according to the American Psychological Association. It is the study of the mind, how it works, and how it affects behavior."[3] This section will evaluate the various human behaviors and cognitive abilities for further understanding of human relationships.

The importance of comprehension about human interaction is essential to advocating the efficacy of mentorship. This section seeks to peel back the layers of human development to expose how humans relate to one another. The older Christian women at The Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church must engage the younger women for the vitality of the church.

However, first, the older Christian women must learn how to connect with the younger women. Communication is one-way older Christian women and younger Christian women can connect and build stronger relationships. Psychosocial is the portal

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[3] Yvette Brazier, "What is psychology and what does it involve?" Medical News Today, February 1, 2018, https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/154874.

through which humanity connects in community and church. This unit seeks to present the capacity of communication as it relates to psychosociology and mentorship.

Overview

Biblical Overview

The biblical text, Titus 2:3-5, reads,

> Likewise, tell the older women to be reverent in behavior, not to be slanderers or slaves to drink; they are to teach what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be self-controlled, chaste, good managers of the household, kind, being submissive to their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited (Titus 2:3-5, NRSV).[4]

Titus 2:3-5 embodies mentorship between older and younger Christian women. This doctoral project hinges on the above pericope, but the successfulness of this dissertation project relies on GOD'S word. The apostle Paul authors GOD'S word in Titus 2:3-5 and demonstrates GOD'S will for humanity's relationship with one another.

Paul leaves explicit instructions for Titus, his son in the ministry, to teach the younger Christian women. The younger Cretan women became new Christian converts. Crete was a pagan place and lacked integrity. The younger women, some of Crete's new Christian converts, desired to live as GOD commanded.

Titus pairs the women for a specified relationship. The Cretan converts would learn how to be godly women through the spiritual development of the older Christian women. Titus does not inform the older women how to teach the younger women. However, Titus does imply that the older Christian women are qualified to aid in the

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[4] Biblia, "Titus 2:3-5," https://biblia.com/bible/nrsv/titus/2/3-5.

spiritual growth of the unlearned younger women. The older Christian women must have known how to connect with the younger new Christian Cretan converts.

This biblical text helps to govern how mentorship can aid in the development of another's mentality and spirituality. This pericope embodies Christian mentorship but also the understanding that Christian mentorship is different than secular mentorship.

The Old and New Testaments Holy *Scriptura*[5] – Latin for scripture – is the doctrine utilized by numerous Christians as the governing lifestyle. Titus implements Paul's theological persuasion found in 2 Timothy 3:16 -17 (NRSV) as the teaching lifestyle for the Christian: "All scripture is inspired by GOD and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to GOD may be proficient, equipped for every good work."

The cultural, literary, and historical biblical content of Titus 2:3-5 elaborates comprehension about GOD'S expectation of HIS children. This dissertation project is girded with GOD'S word, HIS expectation of HIS children. The historicity of the biblical text intertwines its conclusive teachings of GOD'S writings to the Christian.

Historical Overview

The Historical Foundations chapter demonstrates a mentorship model between Mary Mcleod and Dorothy Height. Bethune's and Height's relationship exemplified nurturing, a key component in mentoring. Bethune was a tutelary presence in Height's

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[5] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 1254.

young-adult life, and Bethune became instrumental in Height's political and social achievements.

Bethune was the founder and overseer of the National Council of Negro Women, an organization that advocated for the rights of numerous negro women. Through Bethune's expertise, Height learned how to navigate through radical racism and ethnic exclusion. The mentorship that Bethune and Height encountered produced political platforms and social catalysts for many African American women.

Fannie Lou Hamer was an African American woman who benefited from the mentorship of Bethune and Height. Hamer's bold approach to racism and division made her a force to be reckoned with in a mostly White populated world. Height worked with Hamer to advocate for the rights of numerous Black women. Bethune's declarative voice for justice and equality changed the racial narrative for many African American women.

The mentorship model between Bethune and Height produced some strong African American women leaders in America. Hamer, who has already been mentioned, Shirley Chisolm, Barbara Jordan, along with today's influential Vice President Kamala Harris, undoubtedly have all been strengthened by Bethune. Bethune and Height are two Black women who gleaned from one another and strengthened one another's purpose while unleashing GOD's purpose for equality. Their political platform has been enlarged to accommodate and advocate for brown and black women worldwide.

Theological Overview

The Theological Foundations chapter demonstrates how GOD and humanity relate to one another as well with HIM. Theology can be understood as the study of

GOD. However, relational theology, theological anthropology, ecclesiology, and womanist theology are various lenses through which theology can be viewed.

Understanding GOD and HIS relationship with humanity is a unique discovery for each person. One's theology is individualized but can be also generalized based upon their introduction and relationship with GOD. A supporting element of one's theology can be the church's doctrine and religious practices.

Key biblical practices and rituals help to solidify GOD'S relationship with HIS followers. Theological themes like relational theology give relevance of importance in GOD'S connectivity with HIS creation. As humanity is created in the *Imago Dei*, the image of GOD, humanity's characteristics ought to bear resemblance of GOD. GOD'S pure and perfect demeanor is not assigned to humanity's imperfection. However, the faithful heart of every believer is to live holy because GOD is holy. Learning how to connect with GOD offers understanding about how to live with one another.

Theological anthropology informs how humanity relates to one another. As humanity is created by GOD, there is no one who GOD is not a part of. Humanity's responsibility to unify and live among each other is essential to the procreativity of the world. The word of GOD can be the template by which humanity can follow to live in harmony with GOD and with one another.

Ecclesiology, derived from the Greek word *ekklesia,* is the study of church. The study of church polity is individualized in Christian churches. The praxis of church doctrine is endorsed by GOD'S word and implemented by GOD'S people.

Womanist theology is the lens that numerous African American women use to view the world as well as the word of GOD. Some African American women may argue

that the womanist theological lens offers them an opportunity to see themselves in the grand narrative of life. Many African American women may believe that culture and societal norms have helped erroneously informed their understanding of self.

Many slaves may have been introduced to a God who preferred White people to Black people. Black women likely endured negative experiences because of believing in a God who showed partiality to their White counterparts. Learning and understanding the GOD of their existence probably helped numerous African American women feel valued.

Many Black and White churches likely worshipped differently and esteemed their women congregants uniquely. Womanist theology gives many African American women a platform on which to be heard and seen. Numerous African American women may have been inspired by Katie Cannon and Alice Walker's theological perspective enough to develop their own relationship with GOD.

Interdisciplinary Theme: Psychosociology

The American Psychological Association defines psychosocial as "describing the intersection and interaction of social, cultural, and environmental influences on the mind and behavior."[6] The lack of enthusiasm appears to be worsening among the women of Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church, particularly ages thirty to sixty. The personalities of the women from Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church from thirty to sixty may have different behavior or personalities. There may be numerous reasons the older and younger women may have different personalities and do not appear to connect.

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[6] American Psychological Association, s.v. "psychosocial," http://www.dictionary.apa.org/psychosocial.

Some psychology professionals may believe that age differences, social, cultural, and environmental influences can impact older and younger women differently and may interrupt their connectivity.

Psychosocial is a genre of psychology. The American Psychological Association defines psychology as "the study of the mind, how it works, and how it affects behavior."[7] Numerous professionals consider psychology a science because it shares the development of research and presented data. However, there may be some psychologists who can argue that science in general terms may not convey assimilation of psychology. Science can be seen as the explanatory to creation and life's complicated questions.

Ian Barbour's Model

Nuclear physicist Ian G. Barbour argues that his overview of "integration has three models that can be considered for comparison between science and religion. In his book, *When Science Meets Religion*, Barbour uses natural theology, theology of nature, and process theology as examples of scientific and religious perspectives.[8]

Religion and science perspectives are important to this unit because each brings a unique explanation about human development and relationship. Relationships are as diverse as people are, but each can be essential to the fulfillment of one's life. The exploration of psychology and its multifaceted properties can provide clarity about human behavior.

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[7] Yvette Brazier, "What is psychology and what does it involve?" Medical News Today, February 1, 2018, https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/154874.

[8] Ian G. Barbour, "Four Views of Science and Religion." *When Science Meets Religion: Enemies, Strangers, or Partners?* New York, N.Y: HarperOne, 2000), 36-38.

This section investigates how this discipline can be instrumental on other psychosocial platforms. For instance, this dissertation project will explore psychosocial and cognitive behavior in sports, entertainment, and religious venues. The objective of this chapter encompasses the parameters of psychosociology and its impact on human relations.

Psychosociology

The personalities of the women from Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church from thirty to sixty may have different behavior or personalities shaped by societal norms or possibly by psychosocial culture. Erik Erikson's eight taxonomy of psychosocial development theories may be able to speak to human behavior and how humans relate to one another. Erikson insists that his psychosocial chart "addresses the psychological needs of the individual (i.e., psycho) as well as conflicts with the needs of society (i.e., social)."[9] No one stage seems to shape one's personality but a compilation of all of Erikson's Psychosocial Stages.

[9] Saul McLeod, "Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development," January 25, 2024, *Simply Psychology*, https://www.simplypsychology.org/erik-erikson.html?ezoic_amp=1.

Erikson's Psychosocial Stages

Stage	Basic Conflict	Virtue	Description
Infancy 0–1 year	Trust vs. mistrust	Hope	Trust (or mistrust) that basic needs, such as nourishment and affection, will be met
Early childhood 1–3 years	Autonomy vs. shame/doubt	Will	Develop a sense of independence in many tasks
Play age 3–6 years	Initiative vs. guilt	Purpose	Take initiative on some activities—may develop guilt when unsuccessful or boundaries overstepped
School age 7–11 years	Industry vs. inferiority	Competence	Develop self-confidence in abilities when competent or sense of inferiority when not
Adolescence 12–18 years	Identity vs. confusion	Fidelity	Experiment with and develop identity and roles
Early adulthood 19–29 years	Intimacy vs. isolation	Love	Establish intimacy and relationships with others
Middle age 30–64 years	Generativity vs. stagnation	Care	Contribute to society and be part of a family
Old age 65 onward	Integrity vs. despair	Wisdom	Assess and make sense of life and meaning of contributions

Figure 1.

I applaud Erikson's predetermined psychosocial stages of human development and personality particularly on trust and mistrust. In Figure 1 above, trust vs. mistrust is demonstrated in stage one of Erikson's psychosocial concepts of development. Arguably, trust may be established not only because of what is done but how it is done. Erikson's theory argues that trust is intentional and repetitive. Trust can make one accountable to another's expectations.

Trust is not the only important personality trait in Erikson's Stages of Development, but trust is a notable factor in numerous relationships. Trust is a significant personality trait, especially when involving one's interpersonal skills. Older Christian women may trust one another because of their similar values but may distrust younger Christian women because of the lack thereof. Erikson's psychosocial stages overlap but the anchor of the stages is trust.

However, mishandling trust can result in an opposing and deteriorating outcome. Interestingly, according to Erikson's theory, trust is developed during the first eighteen months of human life. However, some adults may not invest the time to create a sound and trusting relationship. Effective mentoring may not happen without mentor-mentee trust.

Erikson's response to trust in a compromising world demonstrates anxiety and further mistrust of others.[10] Erikson's psychosocial chart indicates that if trust can be created and strengthened, then trust can also be violated and deteriorated. The glaring message in Erikson's theory conveys that a meaningful relationship can result from trust that is nurtured and respected.

Social Psychology

Social psychologist studies human and group behavior involvement with social influences.[11] In societal relationships trust is earned and regarded as essential to high performance and longevity of organization. For instance, Automatic Data Processing (ADP) is a proponent of trust in the workplace:

> Trust matters because it's a huge contributor to employee motivation and employee engagement, and those in turn have a huge impact on organizational performance.[12]

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[10] Saul McLeod, "Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development," January 25, 2024, *Simply Psychology*, https://www.simplypsychology.org/erik-erikson.html?ezoic_amp=1.

[11] American Psychological Association, "Social Psychology Studies Human Interactions, https://www.apa.org/education-career/guide/subfields/social.

[12] Cat Distasio quotes Jordan Birnbaum, VP and Chief Behavioral Economist at ADP, in his article that does not have a title; Cat DiStasio, "If you Build Trust, Engagement Will Come," *Spark,* http://www.adp.com/spark/articles/2020/04/if-you-build-trust-engagement-will-come.aspx.

Working alongside one another with similar skills sets may not be enough to be productive. Jordan Birnbuam insinuates in his above comment to Automatic Data Processing that trust is vital to the working relationship and function of the organization. Many churches can be seen as religious organizations that depend on their congregants working cohesively to achieve desired outcomes.

Sometimes different personalities can become shaped by professional norms and values. Being accountable to one another in communal departments can be the expectation for some organizations while individual accountability is the norm with other businesses. For example, an Uber independent contractor is responsible for their business resources, i.e., reliable transportation. However, the public which Uber serves trusts the independent contractor to abide by all the Uber company's values and practices to keep their customers comfortable and safe.[13] Some social psychologists might agree that many social settings can imprint human behavior. For example, we see this in the entertainment industry. African American olympian track star, Sha'Carri Richardson, was abandoned by her mother when she and her sister were children. Richardson's aunt Shayaria and grandmother Betty did not lie to Sha'Carri about her mother's obvious rejection of her and her sister. Sometimes the pain of Richardson's absent mother was more than she could handle, as she suffered psychological trauma from her abandonment. However, the truth about how loved and wanted she was by her grandmother Betty and Aunt Shayaria helped Richardson to heal. Richardson's courage to live, love, and win accomplished great feats for her even though Richardson was not afforded a trusting relationship with

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[13] Uber, Independent Contractor, https://www.google.com/search?q=an+Uber+independent+contractor+is+responsible+for+their+business&oq=an+Uber+independent+contractor+is+responsible+for+their+business+&aqs=chrome..69i57.1586j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8.

her mother. Ms. Betty and Aunt Shayaria became surrogate parents Richardson could trust. Richardson's life continues to show signs of trauma. Richardson can now trust again, but just as importantly, Richardson can be trusted.

Communication Psychology

Communication can mean relating to someone with verbal and nonverbal means. Communication psychology is a byproduct of psychology; it is an avenue to examine how humans relate through talking and non-speaking gestures. S. L. Marlow writes in her article "Quality Beats Quantity in Team Communications," that productivity in the workplace can be strengthened by quality communication.[14] Marlow further explains in her article, "people often discuss team communication but don't always specify exactly what type of communication they're referring to."[15]

The type of communication between older women and younger women can be interesting. Women thirty to sixty years have diverse backgrounds. Diverse backgrounds may make communicating challenging. For example, many Millennials also named Generation Y (born 1981-1996) are technology driven with emails, texts, and virtual platforms while some born (1965-1980) known as Generation X prefer face-to-face meeting.[16] Closing the gap between many older and younger Christian women may be possible with honest and engaging discussions about their differences. One writer

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[14] Shannon L. Marlow, "Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes," *Science Direct,* doi:10.1016/j.obhdp.2017.08.001 Does team communication represent a one-size-fits-all approach?

[15] Marlow, "Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes."

[16] Alistair Gardiner, "From Boomers to Zoomers: Crossing the Communication Divide at Work," January 22, 2024, *MDLinx,* https://www.mdlinx.com/article/from-boomers-to-zoomers-crossing-the-communication-divide-at-work/5sGEpOlr4ShazPsyrVoXJP.

suggested that some older Christian women could strengthen relationships with younger Christian women by sacrificing their time in addition to allowing younger Christian women to speak without judgment.

Communication can be a strong tool that underpins the most diverse relationships. Whereas I do agree with Marlow's argument about the quality of communication, I also insist that understanding one another's language is vital to effective communication. The understanding of communication psychology may help to navigate intergenerational conversations.

Older Christian women may avoid younger Christian women because of ineffective communication styles. Tone, tensity, and timing can have negative impact when used inappropriately during a conversation. My context is a southern rural edifice, but since building developers have enlarged nearby communities, Lattisville's congregation has an urban dialect.

Maslow's communication theory offers insightfulness when shaping diverse generations. Leading intergenerationally can require understanding one another's language. Darrell E. Hall, author of *Speaking Across Generations*,[17] declares that knowing how to communicate with other generations can prove to be efficacious. Hall argues that learning cross-generational lingo can prove beneficial when developing bonds with other age groups.[18] My context leadership must learn to speak fluently to each generation to increase the momentum in discipling others.

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[17] Darrell E. Hall, *Speaking Across Generations: Messages that Satisfy Boomers, Xers, Millennials, Gen Z, and Beyond* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2022), 123.

[18] Hall, *Speaking Across Generations,* 127.

Major corporations consider their spatial customer base and how to better serve the diverse, equitable, and inclusive consumer. *Forbes Magazine* reported Barbie by Mattel as one business that has done a "great job."[19] Mattel notably engaged multiethnicities with its new version of Barbie.

Mattel's consumers' disdain about a Barbie that did not look like them was attention grabbing to the billion-dollar corporation. One business strategist said, "If consumers see themselves in the brand, they will engage."[20] The Forbes Communication Council – eight women and three men shared with numerous customers beneficial information on eleven companies around the world.[21]

1. Good American
2. Progressive
3. Haagen-Dazs
4. Target
5. Coca-Cola
6. Peloton
7. Nike
8. Apple
9. Dove
10. The National Basketball Association
11. Barbie

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[19] Keith Bendes, "11 Brands That Successfully Model Diverse and Inclusive Advertising," *Forbes,* https://www.forbes.com/councilsforbescommunicationscouncil/2022/07/15/11-brands-that-successfully-model-diverse-and-inclusive-advertising.

[20] Keith Bendes, "11 Brands That Successfully Model Diverse and Inclusive Advertising," *Forbes,* https://www.forbes.com/councilsforbescommunicationscouncil/2022/07/15/11-brands-that-successfully-model-diverse-and-inclusive-advertising.

[21] Keith Bendes, "11 Brands That Successfully Model Diverse and Inclusive Advertising," *Forbes,* https://www.forbes.com/councilsforbescommunicationscouncil/2022/07/15/11-brands-that-successfully-model-diverse-and-inclusive-advertising.

Conclusion

Titus 2:3-5 conveys to Christians a working mentorship model between Christians and new converts, particularly between older women and younger women. The praxis of this scripture is quintessential to this doctoral project because older Christian women may be more prepared to lead and nurture younger Christian women. This pericope correlates teaching and guidance as necessary tools for discipleship. Paul's instructions to mentor the regenerates in Crete changed their lying narratives to conversations of truth. Paul addressed a need for GOD'S word to remain sacred through lived-out discourses.

Paul ultimately helps to transform the Cretans' mindset. For instance, instead of being disobedient to GOD, the new Christians would learn how to obey GOD. GOD considers our obedience better than any sacrifice we can offer HIM (I Samuel 15:22). Adopting a new mind set would take effort and time — but more importantly, patience. There are numerous variables to examine how older and younger Christian women relate in Titus 2:3-5.

The interdisciplinary theme of social psychology enlightens the doctoral project of some fallacies about multigenerational relationships. Older and younger Christians, though they come from different backgrounds, can respectively learn from one another and be unified. Many businesses implement leadership training for their management teams for better work performance.

The social cognitive theory illustrates the same but also remarkably different exhibited behaviors among older and younger people. How one collaborates with thoughts and ideas and relates to another person can be investigated by social cognitive

theories. Christians can connect more effectively when there is trust. Trust can be achieved when there is clarity about one's thought process and actions.

Social cognitive theories help steer social influences and healthy practices. Religious and other settings must work collectively to accomplish a desired outcome. Human growth and development can impact behavior, and behavior can impact relationships.

The doctoral project recommends creating a mentorship training module. The module will involve group discussions about scripture passages, lesson studies, independent work about the lesson studies, and journaling. The training module focuses on educating the context's leadership about discipleship and evangelism. The doctoral project will examine the various personalities of the participants with a personality test. The project participants will hopefully discover and discuss the hidden characteristics about themselves. The doctoral project will last six to eight weeks.

The context Christian leaders will meet voluntarily in person for six to eight weeks beginning in Winter of 2025. Titus 2:3-5 will be introduced to the project participants and a correlating lesson study will follow. Project participants will flesh out their theological perspectives during the leadership training. The project participants will discuss Titus 2:3-5 with life parallelism. The scripture discussion will segue to the participant's independent studies. Each project meeting will open and close with prayer. Online free personality tests will be conducted with the participants' approval.

The leaders will compare their perspectives about discipleship and create new concepts to evangelize younger congregants. Younger women at LGMBC are not currently mentored by older women; this may cause a vicious cycle for other women in

need of spiritual guidance and nurturing. The ministry of LGMBC will become more connected and beneficial to its community as the women relate to one another through open and honest communication. Communication skills paired with cognitive theories will likely inform this doctoral project and raise awareness about Christian mentorship between older and younger women.

Journaling, Bible study, personality test, discussions, along with pre-questionnaires and post-questionnaires of the proposed project will form the methodology for this doctoral project. Any discussions, personally and otherwise, shared by project participants are regarded as private information. Confidentiality of the doctoral project participants will be explained and reviewed at the onset of the doctoral project. Upon agreement of confidentiality terms, all participants will sign a form indicating their approval.

The data collected from this doctoral project will be used to improve Christian intergenerational relationships. The researcher will respect the rights of any participant's personal views regarding discussions of project topics. This doctoral project is a labor of love and it seeks to strengthen evangelism in many churches and surrounding communities. The mission of this doctoral project is to advance the kingdom of GOD through effective mentorship.

The Interdisciplinary Foundations chapter is the framework erected by the first four chapters of the doctoral project. This doctoral project is a collaborative effort between the researcher and project participants but most of all GOD and HIS word. The word of GOD is the foundation by which this project will stand.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

I became an ordained minister under the tutelage of the Rev. Dr. George Crews, III, in 2017. Dr. Crews is the Senior Pastor of the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC). LGMBC is in Hurdle Mills, North Carolina, a rural county. I have been in leadership at LGMBC for seventeen years. Upon joining LGMBC in July 2006, I sang in the choir and joined the Women's Ministry.

The Women's Ministry was a diverse group of women aged from 45- 65, and they were from various social classes but mostly women from the Hurdle Mills community. I am excited about where I am in ministry. Currently, I serve as an associate minister at LGMBC, the Christian Education Director, and I am the Vice President of the Women's Ministry. The LGMBC Women's Ministry is a warm and loving group of ladies, and I owe these women a debt of gratitude for their hospitality.

However, before coming to LGMBC and getting ordained, I ushered, worked as a missionary, led the dance ministry, and I taught Sunday School in another rural church. In an earlier ministry, I led the youth and young adult Mime dance ministry for four years. Through the years, I formed mentoring relationships with the young girls I had worked alongside in the youth and young adult ministry. However, there were times

when I was the mentee to those older than me. Older Christian women groomed and nurtured me for ministry.

As a young girl, my mother and my aunties also nurtured me. Mother and her sisters shared with me how to sit like a young lady and how to look people in the eye when I greeted them. My mother and aunties cultivated me with their personal life experiences about dating and how to keep my friends close and my enemies closer. However, I learned about GOD's character, how to pray, and the importance of church etiquette from my maternal grandmother, an older Christian woman.

My mother introduced me to GOD through prayers of thanksgiving for meals and sometimes for others. However, my grandmother introduced me to GOD and how to talk to GOD for myself. Grandmother prayed with me until I prayed to GOD for myself. The importance of prayer in my life was the beginning of building a relationship between GOD and me. In so much that I talked about GOD to my friends and prayed for them, initially they thought that my GOD-talk was over the top. However, when they needed a listening ear to their cry or an answer to their drama, GOD looked good. I counseled my peers and prayed for them about their relationships with their families, their significant others, and the world's chaos around them. I imparted in many girls the valuable teachings from some women in family.

Many women in my family helped frame my understanding of the world around me as well as the people I lived with. However, as said, it was my grandmother who shaped my theological understanding and my biblical views. My mentorship started with my grandmother after my mom and dad divorced. After my parents parted ways, my

mother, siblings, and I moved from Georgia to North Carolina to live with my grandmother.

My grandmother was a faithful Christian woman, and her teachings cultivated me into the woman I am today. Before my parents divorced, I had not spent much time with my grandmother. The relationship that developed between my grandmother and me was also an actual mentorship; it inspired me and became the fundamental framework and skeleton for this final project titled, Revitalizing Mentorship Among Christian Women: Reclaiming Our Daughters and Sisters in Sacred Spaces. The title of the project changed from its original name, Revitalizing Mentorship Among Christian Women: Reclaiming Our Daughters in the Baptist Church for two reasons. The first reason is the project title changed to reflect that this project's scope is not about all Baptist churches. The second reason the project title changed was to include many women congregants in places of worship and holy instruction outside the projected ages for this assignment.

This final project also referenced as the doctoral project was comprised of nine but later decreased to seven volunteer Christian women from my context aged forty-five to sixty-five. Over seven weeks of training, I shared learnings about mentorship from myriad sources with the seven women. The resources that provided qualitative data to support or not support this final project included pre- and post-project questionnaires, biblical lessons, recorded sessions, focused group discussions, journal assignments, a personality test, and four foundational chapters: biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary. The listed qualitative data helped to inform understanding about whether my context could or would benefit from mentorships between older and younger women in my context.

My context is Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC). Women are the predominant congregants of LGMBC. However, the lack of unity between older (forty-five-to-sixty-five) and younger (twenty-two to forty-four) Christian women in my context hinders mentorship and cohesion in the women's ministry, jeopardizing its sustainability despite women being the majority. If the older Christian women in the context participate in a mentorship training, then they may be equipped with both the knowledge and the skills to mentor the context's younger women and may improve the sustainability of LGMBC.

LGMBC's women's ministry has a sizable presence amid its congregants but often performs segmentally within their ministries; the women's ministry is one of the ministries that is often misaligned. Some of LGMBC's ministries are diverse in age, gender, and missions; however, there are other ministries that have the same gender but are multigenerational such as the women's ministry. As older Christian women leaders continue to guide the multigenerational groups, fewer younger women are taking part in ministry plannings and programs.

Fewer younger women engaging in LGMBC's ministry could result in a potential threat to the vitality of their ministry, their context, and community. Titus 2:3-5 is the scripture that underpinned this final project. I chose Titus 2:3-5 because of its depiction of mentorship between older Christian women and the younger women within their church and community.

Paul commanded that Titus, his protégé, assign men and women mentoring roles in the lives of an unchurched populace. The place of Titus' ministry was in Crete, which is located in Greece. The men of Crete confessed to be liars. Titus discipled Cretans who

formerly worshipped pagan gods. Titus implemented a Christian-based teaching module for the younger women converts. Titus delegated the older Christian women to live as a godly example and partner with the younger women for spiritual edification. The older women's Christian and ethical living would teach the younger women about God's expectation of them while living at home and outside of the home. The lives of the older Christian women enlarged to include younger women from different background, social status, financial status, and newly adopted Christian beliefs.

As a benefit to the kingdom of GOD, the younger Christian women experienced spiritual transformation and obedience to God. The goal of the expected outcome of this final project is to foster spiritual transformation and strengthen solidarity among LGMBC's intergenerational women's ministry, its context, and community. It is the researcher's hope that the outcome of this project will create awareness for others about the significance of mentorship among older and younger women in community and culture, particularly in Baptist churches.

The expected result of this project is to perform in LGMBC what Titus does in Crete, implement a model of relationship that will transform its people into a more unified entity. My context is a Baptist church where women are the majority. The strength of LGMBC's ministry and this project implementation has potentially sustained this ministry and verified my hypothesis of an ultimate desired outcome.

Methodology:

The basis for the collected data used to prove the hypothesis came from the following methods: pre- and post-project questionnaires (see Appendix C and D), focused

group discussions (see Appendix E), journaling (see Appendix F), videos, and the 16Personality Test[1] (see Appendix G). The qualitative method measured the participants' perspectives, ideology, and behavior.

Pre- and Post-Project Questionnaires

This approach was the preferred method to ascertain project data. The pre-questionnaire provided a first glance understanding about the project participant's awareness of terms, definitions, and scenarios associated with the project's material and concepts. The pre-questionnaire asked the participants eight thought provoking questions about mentorship.

From the eight thought provoking questions, the participants shared understanding about their views, spiritual beliefs, and religious convictions concerning mentorship. The post-project questionnaire data gave insightfulness about potential conative, cognitive, and affective changes in the participants after the seven-week teaching about the project's content. The post-project questionnaire data showed an improved difference from the pre-project questionnaire about the participant's understanding of mentorship and its place in their context.

Focused Group Discussions

The remaining final project participants consisted of five married women, and two widows. The remaining seven women finished the duration of the scheduled meetings

[1] The 16Personalities Test is an online test based on Myers Briggs Personality Test, 16personalities.com.

with invaluable discussions. Group discussions revealed, the seven participants aged at least forty-five years to sixty-five years old combined had been in ministry for over one hundred years.

Group discussions further revealed theological, spiritual, mentoring, and individual experiences among the seven participants during their lifelong Christian journey. The discussions were more engaged among the participants towards the end of the project. During the seven sessions. Gradually, the participants conversed openly about everything from ministry to marriage. Discussions helped to break the ice, showed culture variations among the participants, and were the portal to discovery of the seven women's personalities.

Group discussions provided a safe and confidential space to share private experiences and perspectives from the project participants about the sessions. This approach made responding to project related questions easier for the participants. Each participant was able to respectfully flesh out their own thoughts and feelings about provided material through a dialogue with one another.

Focused Journal Reflections

The third method was the first effort of data collection. It provided in-depth analysis of each participant's introspection about the foundational chapters and other lessons. This method also recorded thoughts and ideas from the participants that helped solidify understanding of non-discussed topics. The assigned writing assignments showed commitment and willingness for the participants to complete their tasks. The provided notebooks became a canvass to privately write about discussed material from each

session. Journal prompts for each session gave clarity of expectations and a framework for the assigned writing. The journal prompts revealed the participant's authentic perspectives.

Personality Test

This final method measured the project participant's awareness of their personality. The free online personality test revealed intimate knowledge to the researcher about the certain behaviors and characteristics of the participants. The participants discovered they had similar personalities. The personality test given was a free online examination by 16Personalities.com. This method was not a guarantee about the participant's performance of this project but did prove as a useful tool for further examination of whether a participant's personality was suitable for mentorship in their context. The participants answered twenty-five questions about personal choices, preferences, and lifestyle habits.

Videos

The recorded sessions revealed the participant's facial expressions. Facial expressions are a non-verbal way of communication. The recordings caught conversations that I missed due to restroom breaks. The video showed that the participants spoke freely when I was not in the room about how they were enjoying the project. Body language and tones of voices that were lost in translation were viewed from the recordings.

There was shared respect for what and why each participant felt the way they did about session topics and other project lessons. This method allowed space for non-vocal contributions to the project as well as reveal facial expressions and body language. Body language and facial expressions proved key in deciphering some of the participants' feelings about perplexing or sensitive content during the sessions.

Project Design

The qualitative method used to implement this final project provided consistent data along with two biblical lessons: Titus 2:3-5 and The Book Ruth as well as four foundational chapters: Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Interdisciplinary. The instructions about the biblical lessons and four foundation chapters informed the project participants' decision about mentorship in their context. The hypothesis was the supporting argument: if female members aged forty-five to sixty-five participate in mentorship, then they will be equipped to serve as spiritual mentors to the younger female members of Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC).

The Biblical Lessons

Biblical lessons conveyed the significance of mentorship in the church: both then and now. Further investigation of mentorship among women in scripture revealed so in diverse relationships. For instance, Ruth and Naomi's relationship involved an intentional relationship that evolved into a mentorship between two distinct cultures. Each biblical narrative in Ruth and Titus supported the mentorship model. Despite the laws and regulations that muted women among men during biblical times, some women had an

innate ability to instruct other women how to live devotedly to God. Naomi instructed Ruth about her community and its culture and as a result, Ruth married Boaz, thus beginning the lineage of Jesus the Christ.

The Foundational Chapters

The four Foundational chapters – Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Interdisciplinary – provided perspectives about mentorship between older and younger women in diverse cultures and settings. The Foundational chapters integrated with the biblical lessons and other session materials helped solidify the significance for the development and equipment of other's maturity and skills set. The four Foundational chapters served as the underpinning for the project and its success.

Biblical Foundations Chapter

Titus 2:3-5 is the scripture that frames the final project. The significance of Paul's commission to Titus, his son in the ministry, created a mentoring model for Christian mentoring among older and younger women. The Book of Titus suggested mentorship from a biblical perspective and solidified the Christian's role and responsibility to equip and develop co-laborers. The biblical foundation was important because its lessons shared in-depth content about the context. For instance, the Biblical Foundation chapter covered the literary context, culture, language, and historicity of the text, thus revealing layers of meaning about the text and its relevancy to this project.

Historical Foundations

The Historical Foundations chapter featured Dorothy Height's and Mary McLeod Bethune's relationship during a time of racial injustice and inequitable treatment of African Americans. Height's and Bethune's introduction was the portal to their mentorship. Mentorship between Height and Bethune demonstrated nurturing, teaching, and leading from an older woman to a younger woman from unique backgrounds. The Historical Foundations chapter erased the lines of culture and age and showed how mentorship was a tool for success for Bethune and Height. The Historical Foundations chapter covered the timeline of Height's life, Height's and Bethune's mentorship, and the mantle of leadership Bethune passed to Height to lead in the National Council of Negro Women.

Theological Foundations

The Theological Foundations chapter discussed theology, defined by Fredrica H. Thompsett, as "the habit of studying GOD." The project presented interesting findings within the Theological Foundations chapter on relational theology, theological anthropology, ecclesiology, and womanist theology in the context of the world and the word of GOD that can be viewed through the lens of Black women. The prior mentioned how theological topics impacted the project's objectivity and illuminated the project's hypothesis.

Human relationships and human relationships with GOD are the focus of this section. The creation of humanity and the connection to GOD'S image were examined as well as an exploration of the Greek term *ecclesia*, meaning church. Finally, this section

discussed the divine purpose of GOD'S relationship with His beloved humanity. God's faithfulness to His people is and will remain a constant reminder of the Christian's responsibility to remain faithful to another.

Interdisciplinary Foundations

The Interdisciplinary Foundations chapter discussed the praxis of mentorship in Sha'Carri Richardson's life with her grandmother and her auntie. Also, discussed among the project participants was Erik Erikson's psychosocial human development chart. Erikson's personality chart demonstrated age-appropriate behavior for humans. Communication psychology and womanist theology offered impactful meaning about social interactions and religious observations from a cultural perspective. This section compared team building methods in key organizations like Forbes, Disney, and Mattel to name a few. These key organizations implemented a mentoring program for new hires and fostered invaluable alliances throughout their context and community.

Implementation of the Research Project

This section of the project analysis covers how the seven-week doctoral project resulted. This section shares the systematic process taken to research and record during the implementation of the final project. The final project consists of eight Christian women aged forty-five to sixty-five years of age. According to the guidelines and the expectations of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the qualitative method used to collect data from each project participant consisted of confidentiality of their identity and respect of their personal views.

The readers will hear from the project participants without having their personal identifiers disclosed to viewers. The size of this final project participant group decreased but the intent of the project did not. The remaining seven older Christian women served GOD faithfully. These Christian women allowed themselves to become stretched with their internal truth and transparency with others in the group. The concerted effort to support this project birthed women who at prior times had not worked alongside one another in other endeavors. For seven weeks, their names were encrypted and all their comments recorded under alphanumeric characters: ABC1 through ABC7. The alphanumeric characters hid and protected the project participants' identity.

These women served as willful volunteers to make this project a reality. Nine of LGMBC's older Christian women responded favorably to a verbal invitation and a letter (see Appendix A) that gave explanation of the doctoral project's intent. A colorful succinct flyer about the final project was created as a visual about the content of the project.

The project started with nine older Christian women from the context who responded in agreement with the project's plan. The nine participants have been with the context for over seven years. Each project participant received an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix B).

The Informed Consent Form explained the participant's protection rights and the binding obligations of the researcher. The Informed Consent Form was not only the legal aspect of the project but also reminded the participants that their support of the doctoral project was volunteer based. The Informed Consent Letter also provided information about external support for potential counseling needs. Each of the nine project

participants signed and returned the Informed Consent Letters on June 21, 2025, the day of the project's implementation. Despite agreeing with the importance of attending each of the seven final project meetings, two of the nine project participants reluctantly dismissed themselves from the remaining project's mentorship training. Although the two project participants were unable to attend the remaining sessions, each project participant prayed for and with those of us who remained with the implementation of the project. The researcher did not replace the two participants but continued the final project with the seven remaining women.

Initial Steps

The appeal for permission to pursue this final project was the initial step in launching its implementation at Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC). I asked my pastor for permission to pursue potential project candidates after I passed Candidacy Review and was released to implement my final project. On May 21, 2025, before worship classes began, I made a clarion call from the church's vestibule to women of the designated-age group to join me on this doctoral project and to please see me after worship service. I did not use the pulpit to solicit project participants because of the power of intimidation the pulpit can impute. I wanted the volunteers to feel free with their decision to participate or not to participate in the project.

By May 30, 2025, nine volunteers answered the clarion call and agreed to participate in my final project. Since I am a leader in my context, and I have access to membership profiles, I contacted the group of project volunteers. I called the nine project volunteers to confirm their desire to continue with the project's development. I mailed the

participant's a formal introduction of myself, an explanation of the project's process, the project's expected outcome, a disclosure offering professional counseling should there be a need, and a promise to respect and secure their identity and project responses. On a beautiful Saturday morning, June 21, 2025, at eight thirty, I met with nine volunteers. The volunteers willing shared their time and personal views for the edification of this doctoral journey. The participants and I sat around a long cherrywood table in comfortable leather chairs. The ladies adjusted to the space that would be theirs for discussing and writing for the next seven weeks. Although the ladies and I were no strangers, this project made us more vulnerable as we shard intimate stories and personal views about church, GOD, and mentorship with younger women.

The first session of the final project was about the letter of acceptance mailed to the participants. Each participant also received an Informed Consent, and I explained to the participants that the Informed Consent was a legal form and that their understanding of this form was primal to being a part of this project. I explained all project mailings to the participants, and each agreed to the project's terms and signed the documents.
I asked the participants if they had any concerns about the project that would prohibit them from moving forward to please let me know. Two of the nine project participants did withdraw from the project because of health issues and scheduling conflicts. The final project successfully moved forward with seven participants.

The Contextual Associates and Peer Associates were quintessential to my sanity, and the successfulness of this final project. The Contextual Associates were involved in handing out and collecting materials and managing the audio/video recordings. The

Contextual Associates have been members with LGMBC since their youth, and they offered some helpful feedback about the context and some of the history of the women. One of the Contextual Associates routinely adjusted the thermostat in the meeting room, thus providing suitable temperatures for the project session's meeting place. The Contextual Associates kept me informed of timing as not to hold the sessions too long. The Peer Associates offered helpful suggestions that made me write more scholarly about this project.

The Peer Associates talked me down from some proverbial bridges as my personal life and the weight of this project had taken its toll on me. The Peer Associates continued to offer their listening ears and compassionate hearts to me while I sorted through doubts of making it through one of the hardest seasons of my life. The Peer Associates' friendship resulted in a steadfast and faithful bond. Dealing with a period of writer's block, the Peer Associates navigated me through questions that eventually led me back to the importance of this project. As the Peer Associates and I read one another's project agenda, we discovered the importance of accountability and responsibility for one another's project implementation. The Peer Associates and I prayed for one another, often encouraged one another, but also held one another accountable for poor study habits and decisions that could adversely affect the doctoral project. The Professional Associates offered helpful guidance through the project process. The Professional Associates met with me in person, on Zoom, or Webex portals to review my progress and the final project's status. The Professional Associates reminded me to use all participation and non-participation as project data. This was helpful information because

despite the two participants' absence from the project, the participants still contributed to the outcome of the project.

The Professional Associates informed me how the participants' absences as well as their discontinuance served as supportive and non-supportive data for this project. The Professional Associates prayed for and with me on this doctoral journey. The Professional Associates reminded me and encouraged me through the shared highs and lows of their private doctoral experiences. The mentorship among the Professional Associates, combined with a can-do ingenuity, developed profound disciples for the kingdom of GOD.

Implementation

Session 1: June 21, 2025, Introduction and Explanation of the Final Project

The first session was the shortest of all the project sessions. I arrived at the project site at eight in the morning. One of the Contextual Associates met me there before the other project participants arrived. The Contextual Associate set up my iPad on the tripod and passed out marble-colored black and white notebooks and black pens. When all participants were present, I introduced myself, and despite each participant knowing one another, each participant introduced themselves. I greeted all participants and one of them prayed over the project. I thanked all the participants again for taking part in the doctoral project. For thirty minutes, I performed an overview of the project, the pre-and post-project questionnaire, the focused group discussions, the journal writing, the foundation

papers, and the personality test. No one wanted a rest break, so the session continued. I introduced the project's biblical text, Titus 2:3-5.

Titus 2:3-5 showed a mentorship model to consider for the project. I asked if there were any questions or comments about the project and their roles, but none were raised and the session moved forward. Next, I explained the Informed Consent Form; this effort was complete in fifteen minutes. Lastly, the participants worked on the pre-project questionnaire form, which introduced the project matter and their awareness of mentorship. The pre-project questionnaire process took fifteen minutes. The first session, including prayer, concluded in one hour and ten minutes.

Session 2: June 28, 2025, Mentorship Through Missions

This session lasted for an hour and fifteen minutes. The Contextual Associates passed out supplies and recorded the session. In the second week, three of the eight participants were late, but all eight participants arrived and seated themselves in the same seats as the first week. The session began with prayer. I introduced the Biblical Foundations passage, Titus 2:3-5, to the group. The participants discussed the mission of Paul and Titus's efforts to unify the seasoned Christians with the new converts and perform God's word. The discussion about Titus 2:3-5 revealed unfamiliarity about the text but a genuine interest about the women's role in the text. Women had a significant role as teachers, leaders, and mentors in the text. Also, the participants immediately recognized the importance of women in the church, which women participants could relate to. Next, the group dialogued about how Paul indoctrinated the Bible to the ungodly women of Crete. Paul commanded Titus to appoint older women to teach the

younger women how to live morally. Titus 2:3-5 is a biblical reference and a reliable witness for mentorship between older and younger women.

The Biblical Foundations contrasted and compared its mentorship model in scripture from Titus 2:3-5 with other biblical narratives depicting mentorship. Other women modeling mentorship included Ruth, Naomi, Mary, and Elizabeth. Some of the women compared their lives to Titus 2:3-5. Interestingly, some of the women disagreed with adding another duty-like mentoring to their already full schedule. ABC1 spoke about her mentor experience in other fields. ABC1 voiced her willingness to lead younger women in the context.

The focused group conversation revealed confusion among some of the participants about mentoring versus having a role model. I tried to resolve the confusion with her own explanation about the difference between a mentor and a role model. I contended that a role model was a person others looked up to and a mentor was someone others may looked to for help. I effectively described the difference between a role model and a mentor. The group omitted the ten-minute break for an earlier dismissal. I assigned the first journal prompt and the session closed in prayer.

Session 3: July 5, 2025, Mentorship Through Partnership

The third week was a post-holiday, and I was concerned about the participants returning for the project. However, the participants arrived and cheerfully shared their holiday memories; as a result, the session started later than usual. The Contextual Associate, per usual, set up the iPad and passed out the materials. The group opened in prayer and the third session began. The participants learned about Civil Rights activists

Dorothy Height and her mentor, Mary McLeod Bethune. This was taken from the Historical Foundations chapter. Height and Bethune portrayed their successful partnership. However, it was Height's and Bethune's relationship that birthed a sound mentorship and partnership. Height did not know Bethune before their first introduction. Bethune nurtured Height just as the older women in Titus 2:3-5 did with the younger women converts in Crete.

The participants discussed the importance of nurturing a younger woman as Bethune informed, groomed, and developed Height for political success during a racial and tumultuous time. Bethune's and Height's social culture were acquainted through racism and injustice, despite the differences of Bethune's and Height's childhood background. Height came from professional working-class parents who lived in a diverse community while, Bethune's parents were slaves. Bethune knew how to connect with Height, despite having just met her. Their personalities were compatible.

The group pivoted and discussed Erik Erikson's Psychosocial Theory and Development Chart. Erikson is a psycho sociologist, one of many experts on human personality. Erickson's chart demonstrated not everyone can mentor another despite the desire. Certain personalities shaped by trauma and culture may not be ideal with other personalities from different cultic backgrounds. For example, someone who is not sympathetic may ignore the silent cries for understanding or acceptance of someone in need of attention. The participants named their age and development on Erikson's chart and discussed the challenges various stages of life can bring. I assigned the journal prompt to the participants and ended the hour and thirty-minute session with prayer.

Session 4: July 12, 2025, Mentorship Through Relationship

Session four came with enthusiasm for two reasons. Firstly, I was excited to see the end of the project implementation in sight as this project was a labor of love but also of sacrifice. Secondly, I was excited about the 16Personalities test results from each participant. After opening with prayer, each participant took and completed the free online 16Personalities Test. The 16Personalities asked twenty-five questions about ethical and moral values. Each participant was surprised at their personality test results. The 16Personalities Test lasted for thirty-five minutes and had twenty-five questions about how the participants viewed themselves. The 16Personalities Test stretched the participants. The women looked introspectively and answered questions about themselves they never answered before. After the 16Personalities Test, I shared the Interdisciplinary Foundations chapter with the group of women. Erik Erikson's Personality Chart helped shape understanding about human growth and behavior. However, psychology is the study of the mind and behavior.

Theological anthropology shows how humans interact with one another. Olympian track star Sha'Carri Richardson's story revealed her abandonment by her mother at an early age. Because of this, she was stricken with trust issues and self-confidence. It was Richardson's grandmother and aunt who recovered her broken childhood and groomed her for success. Richardson's story illustrated the significance of her grandmother's and aunt's nurturing. Despite Richardson's abandonment by her mother, her grandmother's and aunt's involvement in her life affected her growth and development positively.

The project participants discussed the Interdisciplinary Foundations chapter and saw mentorship on other platforms. The Interdisciplinary Foundations chapter, Erik Erikson's Personality Theory, paired with the 16Personalities Test made an impact on the participants' understanding about the significance of mentorship in the context. The session closed in prayer but with lingering conversations between the three of the seven women participants. Three of the women doubted they could mentor anyone because they were introverts.

Session 5: July 19, 2025, Mentorship Through Ministry

Week five was pivotal. During this week, two participants stopped attending the project for personal reasons. This week was also the longest of the seven sessions lasting for over two hours. I met the participants at the meeting site on a muggy and overcast Saturday morning at 8:30. The Contextual Associate had already set up the iPad and passed out the materials for each participant. I prayed for the session, and everyone present. The participants celebrated that in two more weeks the project ended, and they could finally sleep in. I read the Theological Foundations chapter and shared how theological perspectives were personal. This session focused on how ministry was quintessential to a Christian's lifestyle. The women enjoyed the Theological Foundations presentation, especially the part about women as it pertained to GOD'S image. The context is in a rural community where women are still not equal to men in pay, social status, or ministry.

The Theological Foundations chapter showed how humanity responds to one another as people and as spiritual beings but more importantly how humanity relates to

GOD as Divine. I explained to the participants that humanity was the only creation made in GOD'S image, the *Imago Dei*. The discussion quickly became how GOD being so pure was able to live in HIS sinful creatures called humanity. This presentation was the springboard to the Ruth and Naomi narrative. The participants fleshed out Ruth's and Naomi's relationship in this presentation. Ruth's and Naomi's relationship was more than a relationship; their relationship was ministry. Naomi and her husband left their country, Bethlehem, during a famine to cohabitate in Moabite, a country that worshipped false gods and not their GOD. Naomi's sons married Moabite women. Ruth was a Moabite, and her people did not believe in GOD, the creator of the heavens and earth.

The women dialogued for two hours about how Ruth could abandon her country to follow Naomi and her GOD. The writing journal was a continuation of Week Five's discussion. This was by far the best session despite losing two participants. The session closed with prayer over seven participants.

Session 6: July 26, 2025, Am I a Mentor? Comprehensive Questions and Answers

The sixth session opened with prayer. The seven participants sat down in their usual seats. I offered refreshments to the participants, but they kindly declined. I introduced the lesson study for the session. I asked the participants to discuss what they learned about mentorship. This was a comprehensive discussion about each session and the impact that it had or did not have on the participants. The participants answered the comprehensive questions with acuity. The participants' responses indicated clearer understanding about mentorship and what it could look like in this context. The session

caused the participants to look introspectively about mentoring other women in the context. The session closed with prayer.

Session 7: August 2, 2025, Project Conclusion: Comprehensive Questions and Answers

The final session concluded the project implementation. One of the participants opened the final session with prayer. I gave each remaining participant a post-project questionnaire and a pen. I reminded the remaining women of the first session when I initially explained the instructions to them. I thanked the seven women for their participation and prayed for them, our church, and lastly, any potential mentors and mentees. Before leaving, the seven women thanked me for them being a part of the doctoral project and wished me success with the final project. All research data, including journals and any supplies pertinent to the doctoral project, remained with me. The final session closed in prayer.

Summary of Learning

What follows here is a summary analysis of the various methods used to collect data after the project implementation. The pre- and post-project questionnaires, journal reflections, focused group discussions, videos, and a free online personality test made up the qualitative method used for the collection of data for this project. A summary analysis about the seven-week sessions follows next.

Anticipated Outcome on Participants

The participants met the criteria of the project in the age range of forty-five to sixty-five. The women were longstanding members of the context and involved in ministry as well as in their community. The participants were encouraged to be honest with themselves about how they viewed themselves. The anticipated outcome showed the participant's willingness to engage in mentorship with the younger women in the context. After the seven-week session, the data showed the expected outcome of the participants proved cognitive, affective, and conative changes through interaction between the older women and the younger women in the context. Second, the researcher expected the participants to forge new bonds with younger women from diverse backgrounds outside the context. I hoped the participants would model what they learned during the final project on other platforms in ministry and in secular life but mostly in their context.

First Collection of Data

The pre- and post-project questionnaire asked the participants about their understanding of the term mentorship. Prior to the project's implementation, two of the seven project participants understood little of the term mentorship and less about the implications of mentorship. The project participants answered eight questions from the pre- and post-project questionnaire surveys about mentorship in and out of their context. Five of the seven project participants responded appropriately to the eight questions on the pre- and post-project questionnaire. The remaining two participants paled in comparison to their five project counterparts. Interestingly, the pre- and post-project questionnaire revealed most of the participants favored mentorship.

Pre- and Post-Project Questionnaire

The pre-project questionnaire indicated that 71.4% of the participants understood what they assumed mentorship to be in their context while 28.6% did not understand mentorship in their context at all. However, in the post-project questionnaire, 90% of the respondents were confident that they knew what mentorship meant. The post-project questionnaire conveys the effectiveness of the project as indicated by the 90% of the participants who received clarity about mentorship during the seven-week mentorship training sessions.

Question #1

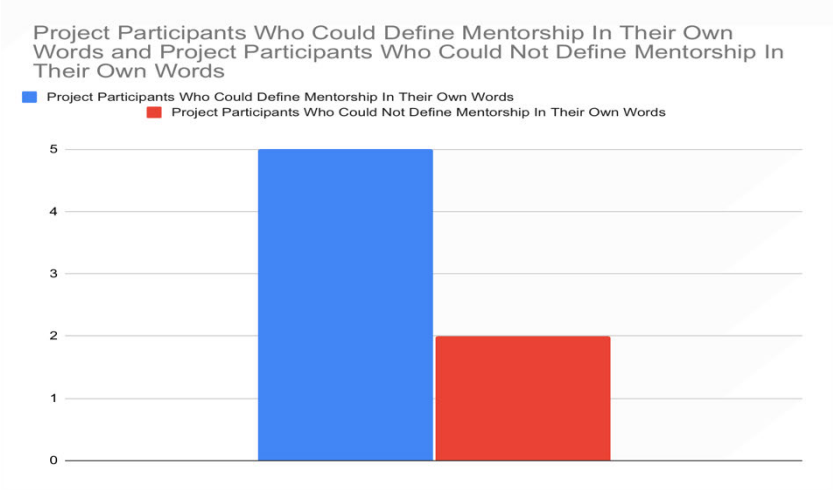
Five participants could define the term mentorship while the remaining participants were not familiar with the term mentorship. The five participants who were familiar with the term mentorship remembered having a nurturing relationship with the women in their family. Albeit, the participants did not understand their relationships with their family members as a mentorship.

Define Mentorship

- ✓ = Participants who had a reasonable understanding of the term mentorship
- ➢ = Participants who did not have a reasonable understanding of the term mentorship
- ✓ ABC1
- ✓ ABC2
- ✓ ABC3

- ✓ ABC4
- ✓ ABC5
- ➢ ABC6
- ➢ ABC7

Question # 1: What is the definition of mentorship. The blue could define leadership and the red could not.


Project Participants Who Could Define Mentorship In Their Own Words and Project Participants Who Could Not Define Mentorship In Their Own Words
Project Participants Who Could Define Mentorship In Their Own Words
Project Participants Who Could Not Define Mentorship In Their Own Words
5
4
3
2
1
0

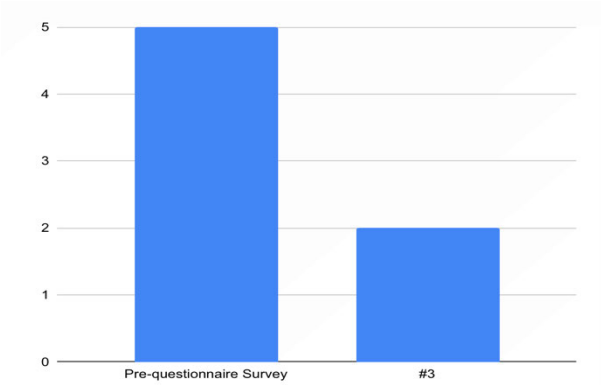
Question # 1. Define Mentorship

Question 2 and Analysis

Question # 2: Have you ever been mentored at any time in your life, and if so, how were you mentored? Question # 2 analysis showed that 71.4% experienced mentorship by at least one person in their lifetime. ABC3 said that she was mentored but was not willing to become a mentor. The five participants were mentored by family members and coworkers, but not in church. Interestingly, the five participants recognized mentoring relationships from other diverse cultures. The remaining two participants in the project were not sure if they had been in mentoring relationships in their life.

Question 3 and Analysis

Have you ever served as a mentor at any time in your life, and if so, how did you mentor another person? Question # 3 analysis drew from the participant's own mentorship experience. Consistently, 71.4% of the participants in their response shared about their past grooming and development relationships with earlier colleagues, family members, and classmates. Five of the seven participants presented positive feedback about their mentoring experience. The 28.6% remaining participants left question three blank. Two of the women in the project were older than some of the other participants and their comfort zone was with their peers.



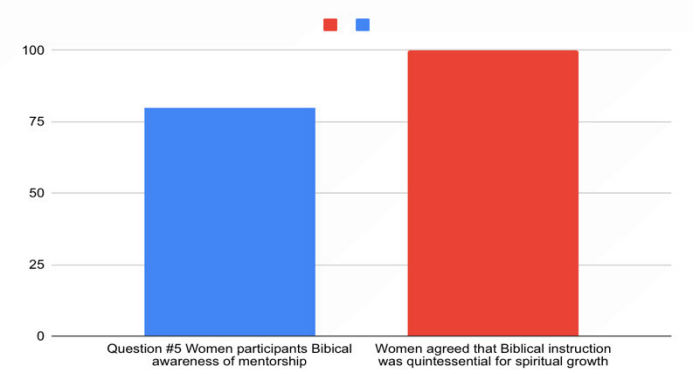
Questions 3. Mentoring as Disciple and Steward

Question 5 and Analysis

How do you understand mentoring as a Christian disciple and steward? This question revealed that 80% of the participants' awareness came about through their biblical awareness about mentorship through Sunday school and Bible study. However, 100% of the participants supported biblical teaching in their lives. The participants were Sunday school and Bible study attendees and active in their church association. 100% of the participants understood equipping and training other women in ministry was essential

for the advancement of the church. Most of the women participants attended LGMBC from its formative years and remember when they trained the younger women for ministry. Many of the women in the project participated in church leadership and faith-based organizations.

Question five on the pre-project questionnaire showed the participants' biblical knowledge about mentorship. The women who responded to question five understood the Bible as a source of inspiration for mentorship. According to some of the participants who answered question five, mentorship was God-ordained. Question # 5 revealed that 71.4% of the seven participants defined mentorship as nurturing and caring about another's direction in their Christian life. The remaining 28.6% of the participants misunderstood a role model for a mentor. The juxtaposition of a role model and a mentor created intense conversation amid the participants and gave insightful data about the position about mentorship at Lattisville from each woman.



Question 5. Mentoring as necessary to help others

Question 8 and Analysis

Why do you think mentorship is necessary to help other people develop into the Christian disciples and stewards GOD has called them to be? Question #8 showed 100% of the participants agreed how important it was helping other Christian disciples gain trust, compassion, and spiritual development in their walk with GOD. As a Christian, the participants agreed 100% that mentorship was a spiritual role, responsibility, and their duty for the edification of the body of Christ. However, two participants still doubted their ability to mentor in their context despite admitting it was the Christian's duty to help others become better Christians. Question # 8 was the final appeal to the project participants about mentorship. The final question assessed the participants views about mentoring as it pertained to Christians. Question eight showed how transparent the seven participants were about nurturing, grooming, and the development of other younger Christian women.

Second Method of Data Collection

The second method of data collection was the focused group discussions. There were sixteen focused group discussion questions. Of the sixteen group discussion questions, each participant was engaged in conversation using two-to-three questions per session. The focused group discussions took place in an intimate setting, the board room. The board room had a beautiful black cherry table adorned with comfortable leather seats which made the focused group discussions more like a laid back conversations. As the seven weeks progressed, the group dialogues grew into shared transparencies about trust, communication, relationship, theology, and of course mentorship. For instance, question

eleven in week five asked the participants did they feel like they were seen and heard in their context. (Question 11) ABC1, ABC2, ABC3, ABC4, and ABC5 felt seen and heard in their context. The women commented if they did not feel seen or heard they would not take part in ministry. The views and responses about question 11 from the five participants concluded that the five women were concerned about their presence in church and the difference they made in ministry.

Third Method of Data Collection

Journal assignments were the third tool used to collect data. Each participant received a free notebook to record assigned notes from the project session. The journals had alpha-numeric encryption on the front cover to conceal the participant's identity. To protect the participants' identity, only the researcher had the key to the alpha-numeric coding. The participants wrote about the assigned topic at the end of each session. I read the journals and recorded the data provided from each participant. The journals remained with the researcher to protect the journals' content and to protect the participant's identity.

Fourth Method of Data Collection

The final method of data collection was collected from videos. Videos provided helpful visual footage of the participants' facial expressions and body language during the discussions. I determined the facial expressions and body language of the participants indicated interest or disinterest in the project's lessons and discourses.

Words spoken accompanied by smiles or frowns from the participants showed their otherwise hidden emotions about project material. I reviewed the session videos and

found them to be a reliable source of information from each participant concerning one another. I watched the video for synergies between the women's body language and some of their answers to the sessions. After viewing the project videos, I discovered that the women were genuine about their responses concerning the topics. Lastly, the video recordings of the sessions proved to be a reliable tool for future project endeavor.

The metric, measurement, target, and actual numbers reflected below shares the group's overall participation during the seven-week session.

Metric Measurement	Participants Quantity of participants	Discussion Duration Minutes	Group Discussion Number of Questions	Journaling Number of Entries	Video Recording	16Personalities Test Participants	Positive Feedback Percentage
Target	9	35	15	9	7	9	100
Actual	7	45	15	5	7	7	90

Metric Measurement Target Actual Numbers

Conclusion

Revitalizing Mentorship Among Older and Younger Christian Women: Reclaiming Our Daughters and Sisters in Sacred Spaces

This part of the chapter offers an overview of the final project. The implementation of this doctoral project portrayed a suggested working model of mentorship between older and younger women in the Lattisvillle Grove Missionary Baptist Church (LGMBC). Nine participants volunteered to take part in the doctoral project; unfortunately, seven participants concluded the project. The final project

demonstrated strong outcomes for the LGMBC women's ministry by equipping its older women with effective mentorship training. The mentorship training included a seven-week guide in biblical lessons from Titus and Ruth, and foundational chapters in biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary perspectives. The method of data collection for the final project was achieved from pre-and post-project questionnaires, session discussions, journal writings, video recordings, and a personality test.

The pre- and post-project questionnaires presented the initial documentation of the participants' knowledge about the context's dilemma with the women's ministry. The comparison between the pre-and post-project questionnaires depicted contrast of the participants' responses. Through the lens of biblical characters and impactive lessons from the foundation chapters, the participants awareness was increased in mentoring with their daughters and sisters.

The older women were aware of the challenges of interaction between them and the younger women. However, none of the participants voiced their concern prior to the project about the challenges their ministry experienced. This project revealed the women's opinion about the lack of younger women working within their ministry but also the project showed how the ministry could be repaired. Collected data revealed seven of nine participant's familiarity with awareness about the lack of conformity within the context's women's ministry. Further data from video recordings indicated the participants' understanding of mentorship and what mentorship could look like in their context. Raised eyebrows and nods of agreement indicated the participants' comfort to engage by nonverbal means and yet be heard. Even further discovery from the session

discussions and journal submissions showed significance of mentorship among the participants.

The participants dialogued about shared perspectives and the interesting ways in which mentorship evolved into relationships. Session conversations revealed that some of the participants' past mentorship experiences resulted from personal and professional platforms. This raised the question about why participants who mentored before did not mentor at Lattisville. The growing interactiveness among the participants concluded that the project implementation went well. However, the journal writings did not go well. Journal submissions did not go well thus compromising some crucial data.

The journal submissions solidified the participants' perspective about the project sessions. Some of the participants did not respond appropriately to every question or prompt leaving unanswered questions to some of the journal prompts. Some of the participants were not interested in mentoring because they feared rejection. However, after learning from biblical, historical, theological, and interdisciplinary examples of mentorship, many of the participants agreed that the women's ministry could benefit from mentorship. Overall, the participants were committed to the project and their submissions proved to be reliable data for consideration of the context.

Many of the project participants' effort to satisfy the criteria for the seven sessions showed desire and determination for a successful implementation. However, for some of the women, their incomplete responses and absences showed less than the best that could have been. Arguably, the participants who disregarded the journal writings did not understand the prompts or did not have enough time. The journals remained locked

up until the sessions began. In the future, I would give the participants notifications of all expected submissions to allow for better time and responses.

Moving forward, I would like to create a mentorship model from this project for the younger women and girls at Lattisville to interrupt intergenerational dissonance and to promote spiritual guidance and growth. The use of illustrative project announcements from the context's audio/video ministry and eye-catching flyers would inform the church body to reach as many potential participants as possible. As the LGMBC women's ministry develops and roles become vacant, the proposed outcome is that the younger women will become successors of their older counterparts and thereby a sustained ministry can result.

For now, demonstrating and educating women about mentorship in ministry is my focus. One of my pursuits in ministry is to focus on the format provided in Titus 2:3-5. Titus showed older Christian women how to train younger Christian women for discipleship and leadership. I would argue that my context can have a flourishing ministry through the tools used in this project as well as the published works from this project. There is a diverse group of women in my context; some may be visual learners while others may be intellectual learners. A printed or electronic copy of my book in the hands of Christian women from near and far undoubtedly can help women partner to perform God's will while birthing more women leaders globally.

Women in Crete are not any different than the women of LGMBC; we are trying to perform what upholds God's word. Therefore, I will continue to implement versions of this project for not only those who desired and were determined to have a stronger ministry, but also for those who are curious about the effectiveness of mentorship in their

context. I will begin advocating for women mentors starting with going live with Daughters of Light, my outreach ministry.

Daughters of Light is a mentorship program for women from all social classes who experience life's challenging and sometimes traumatic moments. My mentorship book partnered with real-life accounts and sound doctrine could transform women. Older and younger women who face low self-esteem about their abilities to lead and live in male-dominated spaces could benefit from this project. Teaching and equipping others to lead in ministry while fulfilling roles of servitude for their home and their loved ones is my passion. This project was the first attempt to train and develop a mentorship model for women. During the unfolding of this project, I experienced uncertainties, but I also experienced vulnerability and delight. There may be many things that I would do differently concerning this project, but not doing anything about advocating for mentorship among women in ministry is not an option for me. Sharing my time, influence, and knowledge with other women in ministry through a caring and nurturing relationship is my heart's desire.

APPENDIX A

EVENT INVITATION LETTER

Event Invitation Letter

Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church
MENTORSHIP TRAINING
Invitation
Calling Women Ages 45-65

Rev. Crystal Bullock happily extends an invitation to take part in a seven-week Mentorship Training Program. Titus 2:3-5 fosters mentorship and edification of the church and can equip women for service in the Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church. I hope you will consider coming and joining this collaborative effort to unify us as sisters in CHRIST. I look forward to working with you each Saturday beginning, June 21-August 2, 2025, 8am-9am

Contact Information:

Rev. Crystal Bullock
[redacted]
Cbullock1@united.edu or crystalpryor85@yahoo.com

"the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed." (Titus 2:3-5, NKJV)"

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

United Theological Seminary
Informed Consent Form
Investigator Name: Crystal Yvonne Bullock
Contact Information: Cell Number: [redacted]

Introduction: I am a doctoral student at United Theological Seminary.

Purpose: The lack of involvement between older and younger Christian women is concerning and counterproductive for ministry. I am conducting a study on mentorship among older and younger Christian women.

Requirements for Participation: You are invited because your age and gender fit the project participant profile. The ideal project participant will be a Christian woman aged forty-five to sixty-five.

Procedures: If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to: Come to Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church each Saturday beginning June 21, 2025, to August 1, 2025, for 6-8 weeks from 9 am to 10:30 am. The six-to-eight week sessions will cover Bible lessons, journal writing, and pre- and post-project questionnaires. All sessions will be recorded, stored, and disposed of confidentially.

Human Subject participation: All the participants must have consent to be in the study, and participants must be protected and treated fairly throughout the study.

Risks: Due to the serious nature of relationships, there are some potential risks that may impact the project participants. For instance, the participants may experience emotional, mental, and spiritual trauma as sensitive matters are discussed. I will mitigate the risks of potential triggers by prefacing the introduction with a disclaimer of discussion content, and I will also refer affected project participants to the host pastor In the event of accidental triggers, a referral will be made to a professional equipped to handle more difficult matters.

Data disclosure: There may be legal, financial, social, or personal implications. In addition, I, the researcher, will abide by my state's mandatory reporting laws.

Benefits: As a result of the study, the expected benefits for the subjects can be to experience a lasting relationship or relationships. Learning about oneself through introspection can also be an added benefit. A strengthened women's ministry that works cohesively to mentor and disciple other young women in the community may be fostered.

Voluntariness: Participation is voluntary, and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You can also stop participating at any time. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your Lattisville Grove Missionary Baptist Church membership or leadership. If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are in the

study, please contact me directly in person, on the phone, or electronic communication. My contact information is at the top of this consent form. You can refuse to respond to any or all of the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time; however, withdrawing prematurely from the process may ultimately impact the results from the project.

Confidentiality: We will be careful to keep your information confidential, and we will ask you and all the focus group members to keep the discussion confidential as well. There is always a small risk of unwanted or accidental disclosure. The conversations and the focus groups will be recorded and transcribed only with your permission. Any notes, recordings, or transcriptions will be kept private. I will be the only one with access to your information. The files will be encrypted and password protected. You can decide whether you want your name used. All project journals, audio, and video recordings gathered during the doctoral project sessions will expire in three years, after which will be disposed confidentially by the presenter. If you have any questions about the research study, please contact me.

Signature: Signing this paper means that you have read this, or had it read to you, and that you want to be in the study. If you do not want to be in the study, do not sign the paper. Being in the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later. Your signature indicates that you agree that you have been told about this study and why it is being done and what to do.

Signature of Person Agreeing to Participate in the Project/Study **Date Signed:**

APPENDIX C

PRE-PROJECT QUESTIONAIRE

Pre-project Questionnaire46

1. How do you define “mentorship?”

2. Have you ever been mentored at any time in your life, and if so, how were you mentored?

3. Have you ever served as a mentor at any time in your life, and if so, how did you mentor another person?

4. Are you aware of any biblical characters that served to mentor other biblical characters? If so, who are these biblical characters and how did he/she mentor other biblical characters?

5. How do you understand mentoring as a Christian disciple and steward?

6. What skills do you believe are necessary to possess in order to mentor other persons?

7. Do you believe that you possess the skills you mentioned in the previous answer? If you do believe you possess those skills, how would you utilize them when mentoring another person? If you do not believe you possess those skills, what help do you think you need to acquire those skills to effectively mentor another person?

8. Why do you think mentorship is necessary to help other people develop into the Christian disciples and stewards GOD has called them to be?

APPENDIX D

POST-PROJECT QUESTIONNAIRE

Post-project Questionnaire

1. How do you define “mentorship?”

2. Have you ever been mentored at any time in your life, and if so, how were you mentored?

3. Have you ever served as a mentor at any time in your life, and if so, how did you mentor another person?

4. Are you aware of any biblical characters that served to mentor other biblical characters? If so, who are these biblical characters and how did he/she mentor other biblical characters?

5. How do you understand mentoring as a Christian disciple and steward?

6. What skills do you believe are necessary to possess in order to mentor other persons?

7. Do you believe that you possess the skills you mentioned in the previous answer? If you do believe you possess those skills, how would you utilize them when mentoring another person? If you do not believe you possess those skills, what help do you think you need to acquire those skills to effectively mentor another person?

8. Why do you think mentorship is necessary to help other people develop into the Christian disciples and stewards GOD has called them to be?

APPENDIX E

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Focused Group Discussion Questions

1. What does Paul commission Titus to do concerning the women in the text?

2. Is the church the first partaker of our role as women leaders? My hypothesis demonstrates that the home is the beneficent of women's leadership for the church.

3. In what ways does your women's ministry resemble the church in Titus 2:3-5? My hypothesis should promote a comparable outcome to Titus 2:3-5

4. What are some of the challenges you have experienced with younger women disciples?

5. Have you witnessed a mentorship model in your church?

6. What key mentoring aspects did you see in the Historical Foundations lesson?

7. In the Historical Foundations lesson, Mary Mcleod Bethune's influence helped shape Dorothy Height into a political leader. How much influence do you have with younger Christian women?

8. What biblical characters shared similar relationships as Heights and Bethune's?

9. The Theological Foundations lesson covers how women can view GOD. How do you view GOD, what is your theology?

10. As a woman, do you feel seen and heard in your church?

11. How do you present to others the Imago Dei, the image of GOD, in you?

12. Learning about relationships in other settings can help inform one about relationships with GOD, and HIS people in church. How useful was the Interdisciplinary Foundations lesson in demonstrating the importance of relationships?

13. The Interdisciplinary Foundations lesson depicts effective communication among leaders in diverse settings. As a leader, how effective is your communication among Chrisitan women?

14. Numerous businesses implement leadership training in their workplace to develop their teams into success. What training would you implement to train leaders in your church?

15. How important is trust in a relationship to you? Do others view you as a trustworthy person?

APPENDIX F

JOURNAL PROMPTS

Journal Prompts

1. As a Woman, What Are Your Thoughts About Titus 2:3-5?

2. Where Do You See Yourself on Erikson's Development Chart?

3. What New Things Did You Learn About Yourself? Is There Anything About Yourself That You Would Change?

4. Whose Naomi Are You? Are You a Naomi in a Young Woman's Life? (If so, why or why not)

5.What are some of the challenges you have experienced with younger women disciples?

6. How has this project impacted your perspective of mentorship in the church? How has this project impacted your decision to mentor in the church?

APPENDIX G

PERSONALITY TEST

Personality Test

1. Do you regularly make new friends.

2. Do complex and novel ideas excite you more than simple and straightforward ones?

3. Do you usually feel more persuaded by what resonates emotionally with you than by factual arguments?

4. Is your living and working spaces clean and organized?

5. Do you usually stay calm even under a lot of pressure?

6. Do you find the idea of networking or promoting yourself to strangers very daunting?

7. Do you prioritize and plan tasks effectively, often completing them well before the deadline? 8. Do people's stories and emotions speak louder to you than numbers or data?

9. Do you like to use organizing tools like schedules and lists?

10. Does even a small mistake cause you to doubt your overall abilities and knowledge?

11. Do you feel comfortable just walking up to someone you find interesting and striking up a conversation?

12. Do you prioritize facts over people's feelings when determining a course of action?

13. Do you often allow the day to unfold without any schedule at all.

14. Do you rarely worry about whether you make a good impression on people you meet?

15. Do you enjoy participating in team-based activities?

16. Do you enjoy experimenting with new and untested approaches.

17. Do you prioritize being sensitive over being completely honest?

18. Do you actively seek out new experiences and knowledge areas to explore?

19. Do you are prone to worrying that things will take a turn for the worse?

20. You enjoy solitary hobbies or activities more than group ones.

21. Do you usually wait for others to introduce themselves first at social gatherings?

22. Does your mood change very quickly?

23. Do you usually prefer to be around others rather than on your own?

24. Do your friends describe you as lively and outgoing?

25. Do you avoid making phone calls?

APPENDIX H

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION

Focused Group Discussion Questions:

1. What does Paul commission Titus to do concerning the women in the text?

2. Is the church the first partaker of our role as women leaders? My hypothesis demonstrates that the home is the beneficent of women's leadership for the church.

3. In what ways does your women's ministry resemble the church in Titus 2:3-5? My hypothesis should promote a comparable outcome to Titus 2:3-5

4. What are some of the challenges you have experienced with younger women disciples?

5. Have you witnessed a mentorship model in your church?

6. What key mentoring aspects did you see in the Historical Foundations lesson?

7. In the Historical Foundations lesson, Mary Mcleod Bethune's influence helped shape Dorothy Height into a political leader. How much influence do you have with younger Christian women?

8. What biblical characters shared similar relationships as Heights and Bethune's?

9. The Theological Foundations lesson covers how women can view GOD. How do you view GOD, what is your theology?

10. As a woman, do you feel seen and heard in your church?

11. How do you present to others the *Imago Dei*, the image of GOD, in you?

12. Learning about relationships in other settings can help inform one about relationships with GOD, and HIS people in church. How useful was the Interdisciplinary Foundations lesson in demonstrating the importance of relationships?

13. The Interdisciplinary Foundations lesson depicts effective communication among leaders in diverse settings. As a leader, how effective is your communication among Chrisitan women?

14. Numerous businesses implement leadership training in their workplace to develop their teams into success. What training would you implement to train leaders in your church?

15. How important is trust in a relationship to you? Do others view you as a trustworthy person?

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